

# TWIN LAKES OF MATTESON ASSOCIATION



## Spring 2026 Newsletter



### **LITTLE SWAN CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING GRANT APPROVED!**

Finally ... the news we've been waiting for! The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) approved a 2-year \$85,000 grant to produce a **WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN** for the entire Little Swan Creek watershed in Branch and St. Joseph counties! After that formal plan is developed and approved, our lake association (and all other interested organizations) will be eligible to apply for larger implementation grants to support changes that will protect and improve water quality in Little Swan Creek and Matteson Lake.

The Branch County Conservation District will serve as the lead agency for the grant, and the Matteson Lake Association will play a major role in the project. **Volunteers from our association will document water quality conditions, coordinate with partner organizations, communicate with stakeholders, identify critical locations and best practices to manage pollution, and ultimately help draft the watershed management plan.**

As part of the grant, our Lake Association committed \$25,000 in matching funds to cover costs associated with expanded water sampling. The Colon Township Lake Board also committed \$25,000 to help cover environmental consulting costs. Other grant partners include the St. Joseph County Conservation District, Colon Township Lake Board, Branch County Drain Commission, St. Joseph County Drain Commission, Matteson Township, Coldwater GSI Department, St. Joseph GIS Department, Friends of the St. Joseph River, and the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency. Clearly, this will be a community effort!



It will take two years to complete all of the grant activities and write the watershed management plan. Over the first several months, we plan to form an Advisory Council, prepare a quality assurance project plan (QAPP), which must be approved by EGLE before we can begin sampling, and train volunteers to help with water sampling in the latter half of this summer.

**Thank you to all the Matteson Lake Association members who submitted letters of support for the grant; and thank you in advance to everyone who will contribute volunteer hours to the project. Watch for future details on how YOU can participate!**

## MEMBER REPORT FROM THE MICHIGAN LAKES & STREAMS ASSOC. CONFERENCE

With support from the Twin Lakes of Matteson Association, Wilson Ray, Larry Lemke, and Wendy Lemke attended the MLSA (Michigan Lakes and Streams Association) 65<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Muskegon on May 1-2. It was encouraging to see and hear from so many Michiganders who deeply care about their lakes and streams but also share many of the same challenges that we face for Matteson Lake and Little Swan Creek.

Our three representatives had the opportunity to learn from experts and well-informed “**riparians**” (*landowners whose property touches a natural watercourse, such as a lake, river, or stream*) about relevant items such as: shoreline habitats, aquatic plants, invasive species, algal blooms, lake water levels, wake boats, nutrient loading, septic systems, aquatic species identification, lake associations, and riparian rights.

After attending this incredibly informative and relevant conference, Wilson and the Lemkes strongly encourage Matteson Lake’s continued engagement and membership with MLSA. The major benefits of this would be **connections** with other lake associations to enable the sharing of ideas and experiences; **connections** with important state agency personnel (EGLE had several employees attend to present key topics such as Shoreland Education initiatives); and **connections** with legal professionals who have expertise in riparian rights. Since we just received our grant to work on a formal watershed plan for Matteson Lake, this conference couldn’t have occurred at a better time! And we stand to learn a lot more by sending one or two members to participate in the MLSA meeting each year from now on.



In the meantime, consider taking the following survey anonymously to see how well your own shoreline environment meets the needs of aquatic animal and plant species: [Start the Survey - Michigan Shoreland Stewards](#). Moreover, if creating an ecologically-friendly shoreline is important to you, check out this website on how you can become a Michigan Shoreline Steward: [Be a Shoreland Steward - Michigan Shoreland Stewards](#). Small changes to our individual shorelines can make major positive differences to the health and quality of our lake!

## LAKE ASSOCIATION CALENDAR

**May 23 @ 9 am** – Lake Association **MEETING** in Township Hall

**June 4-6** – Lake-wide **GARAGE SALES**

**June 20 @ 9 am** – Lake Association **MEETING** in Township Hall

**July 4 @ 3 pm** – **BOAT PARADE** (rain date July 5)

**July 16-18** – **BINGO** at Polish Festival Days in Farmer’s Market Pavilion (7:00-10:00 p.m. on 7/16, 5:00-10:00 p.m. on 7/17, 2:00 – 10:00 p.m. on 7/18)

**July 25 @ 9 am** – Lake Association **MEETING & SPECIAL EVENT** in Twp. Hall

**August 22 @ 9 am** – Lake Association **MEETING** in Township Hall

## PRESIDENT'S PAGE (Wilson Ray)

Hello Lake Friends!

I can hardly contain my excitement—this time of year fills me with such joy! The days are getting longer, the sun is shining brighter, and the warm spring days are giving us a taste of the summer that's on the horizon.

I can already picture the long, leisurely floats on Little Lake and the peaceful pontoon boat rides with family and friends. Our beautiful lake has been the backdrop for countless unforgettable moments—family reunions, 4th of July fireworks, cookouts, and fun-filled yard games. Now, watching my grandkids discover the magic of lake life, it's like reliving those cherished memories all over again!

These wonderful experiences are what fuel my passion for Matteson Lake, and they're also why I hold our Lake Association so close to my heart. It's a special group of neighbors who share the same love and dedication to preserving the beauty and joy of our lake.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are so excited about finally securing funding for a watershed management program! With each step we take, we're learning, growing, and strengthening our resolve to protect and enhance this incredible resource. We have some big, bold plans, and I'm confident that, with your support, we can make them a reality. Together, we can ensure that our Lake Association thrives for generations to come!

This year, we'll be keeping many of our beloved traditions alive—our Boat Parade and Bingo at Polish Fest are both being planned now. We are going to pause the Association Picnic this year; and instead, we will have a special Lake Association Membership Meeting on that Saturday. During this special meeting, we will celebrate YOU – our tremendous volunteers! We will provide coffee and some breakfast treats – more to come on this celebration event. These events are made possible by the dedication and hard work of our tremendous volunteers, and we couldn't do it without each of you!

In 2026, we will hold four important Association meetings. We'll continue to invite our agency partners to these gatherings to keep you informed and engaged in the work we're doing together. We plan to invite representatives from the Branch County Sheriff Marine Patrol and the DNR to share valuable insights with us this year.

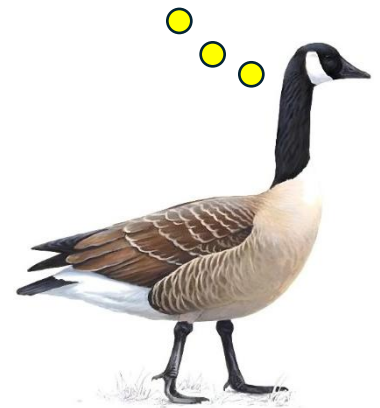
Thank you for being such an essential part of our Lake Association. Your passion, support, and involvement are what make us stronger, and I couldn't be more grateful for each one of you! I'm looking forward to seeing all of you out on the water, enjoying the season together! Here's to a fantastic year ahead!

See you on the water!!!

Wilson

**To be included in the 2026 member directory, submit your registration and dues by June 15, even if you were in last year's directory!**

**If we receive it by May 21, you'll be entered in a drawing for a Matteson Lake hat or shirt!**



**Visit our Matteson Lake website at <https://mattesonlake.org>!**

## VICE PRESIDENT'S PAGE (Sharon Kolassa)

### WELCOME NEW RESIDENTS, & WELCOME BACK TO OUR MEMBERS!

**HELLO** to all new residents and **WELCOME** to Matteson Lake! We have many things happening at the lake again this year. Hope you will all join us. Check our website ([mattesonlake.org](http://mattesonlake.org)). Please become a member of the Lake Association if you aren't already a member!!

### MEMBERSHIP 2026

Membership is a key goal of our Lake Association. Last year we had 139 paid members and 82 non-paid residents. We encourage ALL residents to belong to the Association. *You can obtain a Membership Form on our website at [mattesonlake.org/membership](http://mattesonlake.org/membership). You can either print the form, complete it and return it with your payment to our Treasurer, Erik Sabaitis; or complete the digital form on the website and pay with the PayPal platform.*

### NEW NEIGHBORS?

If one of your neighbors sells their home and the new resident moves in, please contact me. I will meet with the new resident and welcome them to the lake. They will be given a copy of the current newsletter and other pertinent information about the lake. Thank you for your assistance.

### ZONE REPRESENTATIVES

Each area has a person who can answer questions or concerns that you may have. Follow the blue arrow to find your representative.

### COMMUNICATION

Communication is a Board priority. Please email me at [vicepresident@mattesonlake.org](mailto:vicepresident@mattesonlake.org) (or any Board member) if you have questions or suggestions.

**Please be involved! Come to our monthly meetings. Get the current information. Volunteer for committees. Your Board wants your participation, creative ideas, input and feedback.** This is **YOUR/OUR** lake! Let's work as a team.

*Thank you to all our current Association members for their support in making this a wonderful place to be. Have a wonderful and safe season!*

## CURRENT OFFICERS

**President: WILSON RAY**

(Email: [president@mattesonlake.org](mailto:president@mattesonlake.org))

**Vice-President: SHARON KOLASSA**

(Email: [vicepresident@mattesonlake.org](mailto:vicepresident@mattesonlake.org))

**Treasurer: ERIK SABAITIS**

(Email: [treasurer@mattesonlake.org](mailto:treasurer@mattesonlake.org))

**Secretary: BLAIR SHAMAN**

(Email: [admin@mattesonlake.org](mailto:admin@mattesonlake.org))

## ZONE REPRESENTATIVES 2021

### Cove Resort

Tricia Kanter (423-903-5734)

Melissa Peppler (260-450-6921)

### Moser Drive & Fischers Hideaway

Sandra Felcyn (586-243-2105)

### Salek Lane

Tracy Rowland (517-617-6487)

### Werners Landing South

Sharon Cox (269-535-2051)

### Werners Landing North

★ **NEEDS A VOLUNTEER!** ★

### Werners Trail

Charlie Doner (517-369-1075)

### West Shore/Farrand

Edward Gehringer (248-807-5479)

## TOP 6 REASONS TO BE A MEMBER:

- 1) **WATER QUALITY REPORTS** and input by members!
- 2) **FISH STOCKING** of the lake with member input about the types stocked!
- 3) Members may borrow our **LARGE PARTY TENT** at no charge!
- 4) Contact with other members, via email. If you are looking for someone to **PROVIDE SERVICES** for you, send me (Sharon) an email, and it will be forwarded to all lake members.
- 5) **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY** will be provided to you. The directory will not be listed on the Matteson Lake website!
- 6) Members who have something to sell can contact me via email, listing their **ITEMS FOR SALE**. The email will be sent to all lake members.

**IF WE EACH DO A LITTLE,  
WE CAN ALL ACCOMPLISH A LOT!**

## WEBSITE / SECRETARY'S REPORT (Blair Shaman)

I hope everyone is as excited as I am to kick off another year on the lake. Whether you're fishing, skiing, or watching the sunset, be sure to capture your special moments and send them in for the website.

<https://mattesonlake.org> is the best place for latest news and events regarding the Lake Association. Get started by filling out your online membership form today. One of the benefits of membership in the Matteson Lake Association is inclusion in a mass distribution email list. These emails can contain news, requests for service recommendations, sale items, and information on events sponsored by the Association.

It has come to our attention that some members have not received these emails. These people may not know that they're missing out, so we're asking for your help in ensuring that we're communicating with all members. Anyone that does not regularly receive emails from the Matteson Lake Association (usually from Sharon) may need to adjust the spam filter for their email account by whitelisting emails from "mattesonlake.org". If this applies to you, or someone you know, please adjust accordingly. And if anyone continues to have problems, please reach out to [admin@mattesonlake.org](mailto:admin@mattesonlake.org).

## TREASURER'S REPORT (Erik Sabaitis)

Financially the association will be kicking off the 2026 season with the following account balances:



<b>Fish</b>	<b>\$6,663.75</b>
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$28,117.78</b>
<b>Water Quality</b>	<b>\$11,289.25</b>



In the past year we have completed a walleye plant with the DNR that ended up being a free planting. This year we are planning a Spring perch fish plant. The \$5.00 change to the membership fees for 2025 put the association in a good position for the 2026 fish plant and the 2027 matching walleye plant with the DNR.

We have received a generous donation from the Schmeltzers to establish a new reserve fund with the hope that it will turn into a long-term endowment fund. This is an exciting opportunity for estate planning or qualified charitable distributions instead of required minimum distributions.

We continue to offer the ability to pay membership fees via the [mattesonlake.org](https://mattesonlake.org) website. The option to pay online now includes credit card payments.

### LAKE CHAIRPERSONS

**Water Quality:** Larry Lemke  
**Fish:** Ron Rowland  
**Membership, Zone Reps & Advertising:** Sharon Kolassa  
**July Boat Parade:** Art Doner  
**BINGO:** Joe & Sue Sobeske  
**Apparel:** Rachel Jackson  
**Garage Sales:** Melissa Peppler & Rachel Jackson  
**Member Directory & Newsletter:** Wendy Lemke  
**Website:** Blair Shaman  
**Matteson Lake Sign:** Stacey Calder



# Committee Reports

## BOAT PARADE (Contact Art Doner @ 313-402-8800)

This year's boat parade will take place on **Saturday, July 4** (Rain date is July 5)! All watercrafts should meet near the public boat launch at 3:00 p.m. Decorate your boat with a **family-friendly theme** and join in the fun!



## FISH (Contact Ron Rowland @ 517-617-7380)



Hello 2026 Matteson Lake fisherpersons! The Fish Committee has been busy in the off season populating the lake with over 1800 walleye this past fall and 1000 perch in May prior to our first membership meeting. We will be spending this season working with the DNR on the status of the State Fish Survey to better assess the best stocking program for Matteson Lake in the future. The creel survey on the website is a good tool to help better understand what our current fishermen and fisherwomen are catching. **Please take a moment to fill out your catch on the survey** <https://mattesonlake.org/creel> so that we may make the best decisions in the future. You can do this every time you go fishing! See you on the Lake!

## BINGO (Contact Joe Sobeske @ 517-617-0907)

The Bronson Polish Festival is **Thursday, July 16 through Saturday, July 18** at the Bronson Farmer's Market Pavilion. Bring your friends and adult family members to join in the excitement on Thursday (7-10 p.m.), Friday (5-10 p.m.), and on Saturday (2-10 p.m.). **The more players, the bigger the win!**



## LAKE-WIDE GARAGE SALES (Contact Melissa Pepler @ 260-450-6921)



Here's a great opportunity to declutter, make a little extra cash, and give your gently-used items a second life! Join us all around beautiful Matteson Lake for our annual lake-wide garage sales on **Thursday through Saturday, June 4-6**. This is a great way to connect with neighbors and kick off the summer season! All lake residents are invited to take part. Get ready for **three days of treasure hunting** around the lake, where you'll find toys, tools, home goods, and other spring-cleaning items! Bring your friends, bring your cash, and come explore the whole lake community. You never know what you'll find! Please SHARE this post, and help us spread the word. Let's make this the best year yet!

## LAKE APPAREL (Contact Rachel Johnson @ 260-760-4970)



Our creative apparel chairperson offers **custom apparel** and non-clothing items in addition to our regular line of Matteson Lake shirts and hats. Contact Rachel by phone (above) or email ([rachelmorgenj@gmail.com](mailto:rachelmorgenj@gmail.com)) TODAY to get a head start on showing your lake spirit!

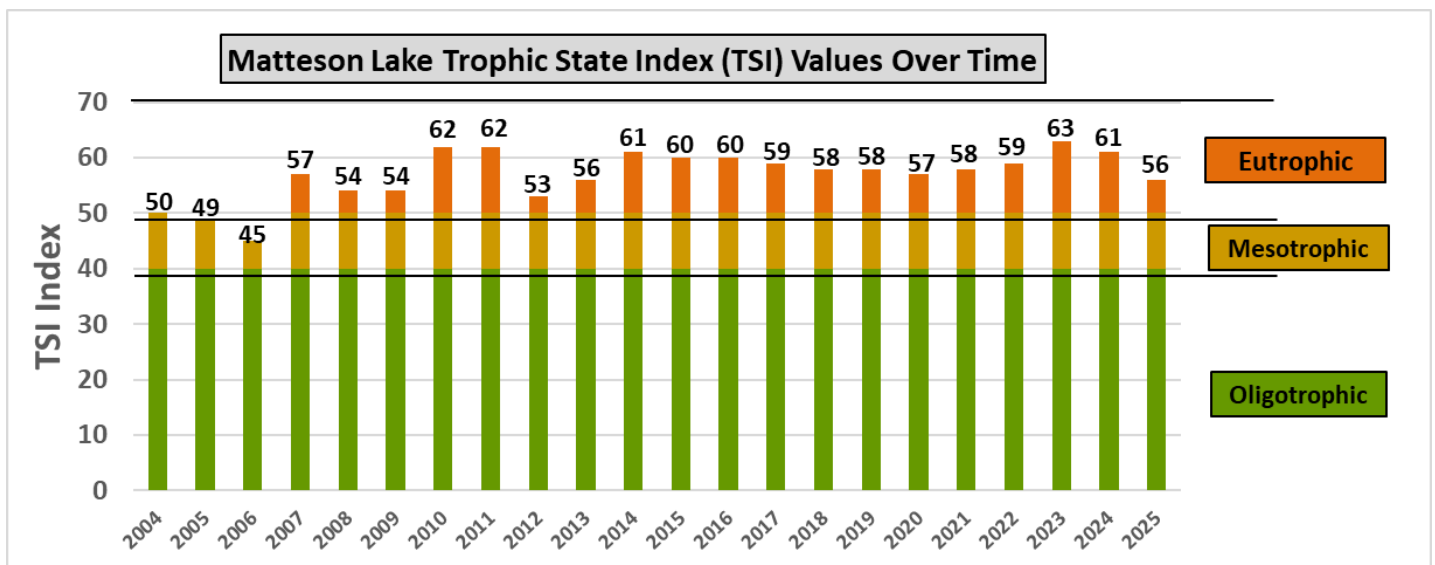


## MATTESON LAKE WATER QUALITY (Larry Lemke)



Water Quality Committee volunteers sampled water from Matteson Lake and its inlet and outlet on August 11, 2025. As in past years, we also sampled five locations along tributaries in the Matteson Lake watershed (which represents the upper half of the Little Swan Creek watershed) to gather information on waters that flow into the lake. The samples were analyzed at the Prein & Newhof lab in Grand Rapids, and there were no surprises this year.

Nutrient concentrations in the lake and watershed were similar to those measured over the past decade. *E. coli* bacteria levels within the lake and the lake inlet and outlet were also similar to those seen previously. **All lake values were safe for swimming; however, swimming in the river above or below the lake is not recommended at any time** because bacteria counts above healthy levels for body contact are present at the M-86 bridge in most years, and high levels were also found at the dam on Butz Road this year.



The **Trophic State Index (TSI)** combines three water quality variables (water clarity, green algae abundance, and phosphorous concentration) into a single score that we track over time to help identify trends in water quality changes. The TSI score was 56 in 2025, reflecting minor improvement in water clarity, slightly lower phosphorous concentrations, and lower algae content in the shallow lake water. A TSI score of 56 remains in the eutrophic category, however.

Our long-term goal is to return Matteson Lake to *mesotrophic* conditions and to keep it there. To achieve this, and to make our Lake Association and our local agricultural and governmental partners eligible for state and federal grants that can fund watershed improvements, we must first develop an approved Watershed Management Plan. **Thanks to financial support in the form of a grant from EGLE, we now have the means to develop a watershed management plan over the course of the next two years!** This process will involve more extensive water quality monitoring than we have ever attempted in the past, but I am confident that the enthusiasm of Matteson Lake Association members will step up and volunteer to help us make the most of this opportunity!

*Special thanks to Don Batey, Bob Kirchofer, John Hoffman, Bill Shultz, Bill Sweers and Paul Felcyn for taking measurements and helping to gather water quality samples on August 11th!*

*And thank you to the Water Quality Committee members who volunteer their time and efforts, along with all the Matteson Lake Association members whose dues and contributions make our work possible!*

**This year, I asked members to share their favorite memories about Matteson Lake. Enjoy!**  
**-Wendy Lemke**

**THE BECHTEL FAMILY**

**OLIVER (13):** I always love the Felcyn 4<sup>th</sup> of July Olympics. My favorite was when we had the Rube-Goldberg competition! *[Editor's note: a Rube Goldberg competition has teams using random objects to build a machine that completes a simple, everyday task in the most overcomplicated, chain-reaction way possible!]*

**MAX (15):** My favorite memory was also our Rube Goldberg competition at the Felcyn Family Olympics! The best part was hunting for the materials in order to accomplish our task.

**LUCY (17):** My favorite memories were definitely the Felcyn Summer Olympics! One year all the teams wore matching bandannas, and we had to crawl through a huge obstacle course!

**MIKE:** I loved the Olympics, too, and my all-time favorite event was when we had two teams competing to bring a greased watermelon from the lake to the shore. The competition was brutal, and we had the bruises to show for it!

**CHRISTINA:** My favorite cottage memories as a kid took place on long summer days, especially 1) hanging out at the Puthoff house, 2) Mr. Puthoff endlessly taking Jenny and me double-tubing (once we went 8 times in a row!), 3) riding little Mike Felcyn on my moped, 4) eating Mrs. Brusak's homemade cinnamon rolls and fresh bread, and 5) walking with Mrs. Barber to look at herbs and flowers. More recently my favorite cottage memories include 6) progressive dinners with the Felcyn Fam, 7) pontooning in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boat Parade, 8) the peaceful respite our cottage provided while I healed after surgery in the first summer we were cottage owners, and 9) living next door to my sister Wendy! (Paul & Mom – I love being your neighbor, too!)

**PAUL FELCYN:** There's nothing like skating the entire length of Matteson Lake on smooth ice. It doesn't happen too often, and 2024 was one of the best years ever!



**TRACY ROWLAND:** Some of our best memories have taken place during the Rowland's annual day at the lake with our great nieces and nephew!



## More favorite memories ...

**SHARON KOLASSA:** I had the great opportunity to spend my childhood at Matteson Lake.

Both sets of my grandparents, Bill and May Guzy, lived in the Cove. Ed and Eleanor Kolassa lived 5 doors from my current home.

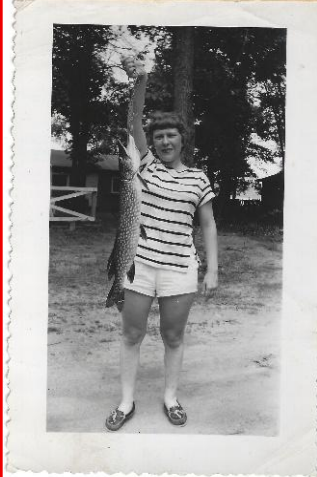
I learned to swim and fish on the Lake. My grandpa Ed would not bait my hook. He told me that if I wanted to fish, I would have to bait it myself. (I was only 5). They didn't have a shower in their cottage, so we took our baths in the lake. There wasn't a bathroom upstairs, where I slept, so I used a Chamber Pot! I had to empty it in the morning. Yuk!

When I would spend the night at age 7, I would get up in the morning, eat breakfast and then tell my Grandma Eleanor that I was going to go down to my friend, Phyllis Junker's house to swim and would be gone all day. These days left me with wonderful memories. Even getting blood suckers on my feet were memories (but not good ones)!

I walked to the Matteson Lake store by myself, to buy candy and other treats. I was never afraid.

My parents and their friends would come out to the lake on Friday nights, fish until they caught their limits; come in and clean the fish; fry them, and we would have a fish fry. Those were wonderful times!

Matteson Lake is my HOME, and I am proud to be here.



**JEANETTE & DON BATEY:** Above are a few pictures of family members from long ago with their catches of the day. The girl holding up the huge Pike is from 1956.

The lady holding her string of fish is from 1969. Her name is Thelma. She and her husband, Jack Brown, built their home on Cove Road back in the 1940s. They would go fishing in the early morning, before heading off to work. We live where they built their home, but in a new home that we built.

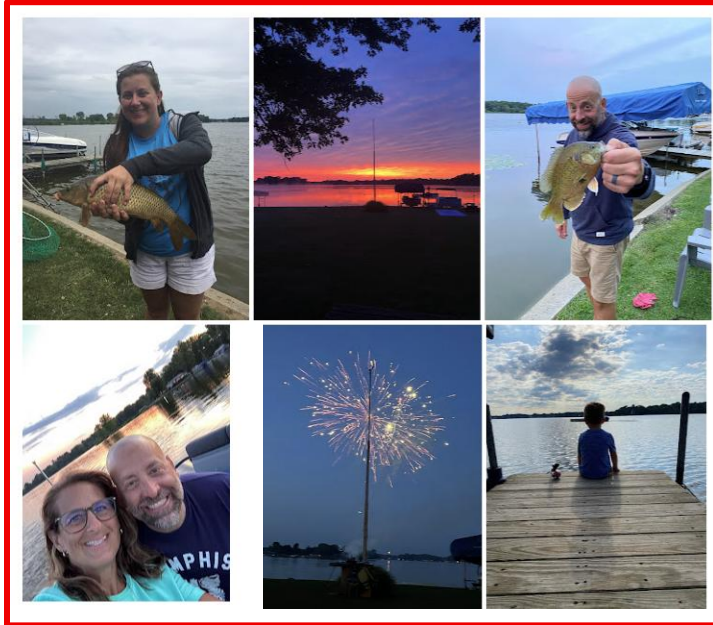
Then there is Mark, my nephew, holding up his catch of the day from 1993. They always caught a lot of big bass back then.

I found the cartoon in Aunt Thelma's pictures; it is from 1949. She wrote their names on the cartoon. It must've reminded her of themselves.

**ART DONER:** One my favorite Matteson Lake memories is our very first boat parade. The first few parades were on Labor Day weekend and there were many creative themes displayed by the participants. We decorated our boat as Gilligan's Island surrounded with bamboo, tiki torches...etc. Our family and friends were dressed in costumes representing Gilligan and all of the show's characters. We played the show theme song as loud as we could for everyone on shore as we led the parade. That was a great start to a long-standing tradition that has grown in participation through the years!

**DOROTHY & WILSON RAY:**

The pictures below show some of our favorite memories.



**WENDY LEMKE:** I've been coming to Matteson Lake since I was born, and I have endless wonderful memories!

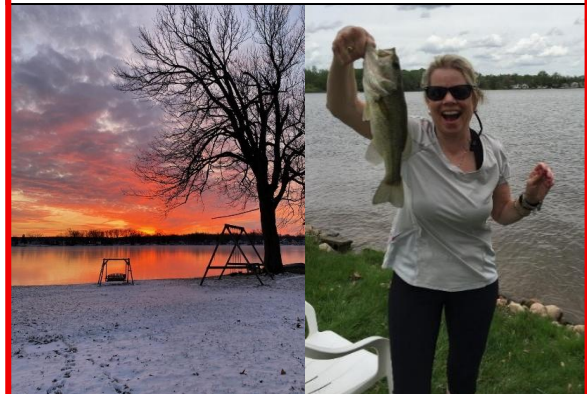
I will never forget my long lazy childhood days in the 1960s hanging out in the clear lake water with my brother Leon and my friends Sharon Fess and Debbie Buholz. (*Debbie's parents Leo and Jean owned the farm on north Matteson Lake Road back then. The farm has since been broken down into several lake properties.*) We would rock up and down in the water on our truck tire tubes, search for snails and clams, fish for bluegill off the dock with cane poles, and swim for hours. And nearly every day, we would walk to the Matteson Lake Store down the road from Leo's farm to buy candy and comic books.

My other favorite memory took place on my 23rd birthday. My husband Larry created a scavenger hunt for me, and I had to find clues all over my mom's cottage property. One of the clues had me swimming out to the raft on the lake, where our dog Slipper was hanging out. The clue was wrapped around Slipper's collar, and it eventually led me to my first set of golf clubs back on shore!



**Even more favorite memories ...**

**SANDRA FELCYN:** One thing I will always remember about Matteson Lake happened over 60 years ago. My sister-in-law Donna and I were fishing in a rowboat near the lily pads by the Little Swan Creek inlet. As we were casting for bass, a couple of huge largemouth bass jumped right into our boat, and they weren't even hooked to our fishing poles! We both got so frightened, we nearly jumped right out of the boat! That was long ago, when fishing was always great at Matteson Lake. However, I'm happy to report that when my friend Sue comes to visit me these days, she fishes and right off my shore and catches all kinds of fish. You can see a picture of her below, which leads me to believe that the fishing is still great if you're a good fisherman! Also, I LOVE the sunsets on Matteson Lake, and here are two of my favorite pictures.



# TWIN LAKES OF MATTESON 2026 MEMBERSHIP DUES FORM

(We ask that you please complete a new form each year.)

Membership dues = \$55.00 (\$20 Fish Fund, \$20 Water Quality Fund, \$15 General Fund).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Lake address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_ (New? Y / N)

Street

City

State

Zip

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (PRINT CLEARLY): \_\_\_\_\_

If you  
**DO NOT**  
want to be  
included in the  
directory, check  
the box below!

*Most Lake Association updates and news are sent by email!  
Email addresses will not be shared unless you select it to be included in the Directory.  
THE DIRECTORY WILL NOT BE POSTED ON THE WEBSITE!*



Please make out a check to  
"Twin Lakes of Matteson"  
and return this completed form, with payment to:  
*Erik Sabaitis, Treasurer*  
*P.O. Box 693, Coldwater MI 49036*



## EXTRA DONATIONS

PLEASE complete this area **ONLY** if you wish to make **additional contributions** to your \$55.00 dues. Please select how you would like the **extra** contributions applied:

Fish Fund:

Water Quality Fund:

General Fund:

**NOTE: IF WE RECEIVE YOUR DUES PAYMENT BY MAY 18, 2026, YOUR NAME WILL BE PUT INTO A DRAWING FOR A MATTESON LAKE HAT OR T-SHIRT.**

Questions?? Contact Vice-President Sharon Kolassa @ 517-227-4621.