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FRIDAY

SANDCASTLES CHILDREN'S Museum, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., 227 W. Ludington Ave.

MANISTEE COUNTY Fair: 1 p.m. carnival, 7 p.m. demo scramble, Fairgrounds, M-22, Onekama

FARMERS MARKET, 3-8 p.m., North James Street plaza, downtown Ludington

BEYOND REAL, featuring the photography of Gale Nobes and the paintings of Adam Tetzlaff, 7 p.m. reception and artists' talk, Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

BANDS AT bars: John Merchant, James Street Station, Ludington; Livin the Dream, Michael's, Ludington; live music, The Village Pub, Pentwater

SATURDAY

SHORELINE ALL Breed Youth Show, Mason County Fairgrounds U.S. 10, Ludington

SCOTTVILLE FARMERS Market, West parking lot, State Street

SHRINE OF the Pines Craft Show, M-37, south of Baldwin

FLEA MARKET, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Mason County Fairgrounds, U.S. 10, Ludington

SANDCASTLES CHILDRENS Museum, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m., 227 W. Ludington Ave.

BLUEGRASS JAMBOREE Music and Arts/Crafts Fair, 10 a.m., noon music, Skinner Park, Irons

HONORING OUR Elders Pow-Wow, Oceana County Fairgrounds, Hart

LOGGING DAYS, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Historic White Pine Village, 1687 S.

Weekend!



It's Lumbering Days at While Pine Village this weekend.

Lakeshore Drive, Ludington

MANISTEE COUNTY Fair: noon carnival, 2 p.m. kids pedal pull, 7 p.m. Figure 8 demo dervy, Fairgrounds, M-22, Onekama

BEYOND REAL, featuring the photography of Gale Nobes and the paintings of Adam Tetzlaff, noon-5:30 p.m., Ludington Area Center for the Arts, 107 S. Harrison St.

PIG ROAST and party, 2-6 p.m., 7 p.m. DJ, Pomorskis, 1302 S. Madison St., Ludington

ART AND music festival, noon art exhibit, activities, 6 p.m. ballroom dancing, 9 p.m. Ed Stone, jazz guitarist, Detroit Idlewild's Club, Idlewild

PIG ROAST and Rodeo, 5:30 p.m. pig roast, 8 p.m. rodeo, Double JJ Resort, 5900 Water Road, Rothbury

THE MACHINE performs Pink Floyd, 8 p.m., Little River Casino Resort, M-22 & U.S. 31, Manistee

BANDS AT bars: Common Ground, The Alley, Ludington; One Way, Riley's Rendezvous, Walhalla; Livin the Dream, Michael's, Ludington

SUNDAY

SHORELINE ALL Breed Youth Show, Mason County Fairgrounds U.S. 10, Ludington

FLEA MARKET, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Mason County Fairgrounds, U.S. 10, Ludington

HONORING OUR Elders Pow-Wow, Oceana County Fairgrounds, Hart

LOGGING DAYS, 10 a.m. church service, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. lumberjack brunch, 2 p.m. Old Time Base Ball Match, Historic White Pine Village, 1687 S. Lakeshore Drive, Ludington

MANISTEE COUNTY Fair: noon carnival, 2 p.m. mud bog, Fairgrounds, M-22, Onekama

END OF Summer party, 12:30 p.m., behind Village Cafe, 374 S. Hancock St., Pentwater

COUNTRY MUSIC jam session, Riley's Rendezvous, Walhalla

THE MACHINE performs Pink Floyd, 8 p.m., Little River Casino Resort, M-22 & U.S. 31, Manistee

MONDAY

LABOR DAY

LUDINGTON AREA Jaycees Mini Golf closes for season

HONORING OUR Elders Pow-Wow, Oceana County Fairgrounds, Hart

FARMERS MARKET, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Village Green, downtown Pentwater

BRIDGE WALK, 9 a.m. downtown Hart

Round Lake is milfoil-free for now

But lake improvement board pledges vigilance against return

BY BRIAN MULHERIN
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

SHERIDAN TWP. — Round Lake is a recreational lake again.

Technically, it always was, but unless you lived on it, you probably weren't making regular trips there.

Swimming was still possible, but boating meant the risk of getting caught up in the weeds so badly that you'd need assistance from another boat to get out.

At one point the 570-acre lake had top-to-bottom Eurasian watermilfoil covering almost 270 acres of its surface.

It was enough to stop not just pontoon boats and fishing boats, but even personal watercraft.

But no more.

A treatment with a chemical called Sonar in 2008 followed by treatments with an herbicide, granular 2,4d, have cured the lake, at least temporarily, of its milfoil infestation, residents and lake improvement board members say.

THE PROBLEM

Eurasian watermilfoil is the worst invasive aquatic plant to colonize Mason County lakes so far. The plant can reproduce itself in a number of ways. If you chop it, you're only spreading it.

The mats get so thick even a powerful outboard motor gets bogged down. On some lakes you have to put the motor in reverse and then forward gear over and over to free yourself of the weeds.

Although the milfoil does provide habitat for fish, it crowds out native plant species.

In Round Lake's case, things were so bad people largely avoided the lake.

"It was real bad, I'm telling you. We've got almost 600 acres of lake and we had almost 270 acres of milfoil out there," said Larry Polacek, owner of Timber Surf campground and a member of the Round Lake Im-



JENNIFER JERMALOWICZ-JONES | COURTESY PHOTO
Roughly half of Round Lake was covered in Eurasian watermilfoil in 2007 before treatments arranged by the Round Lake Improvement Board.

Swimmers enjoy Round Lake at the Sheridan Township Park beach earlier this week. No surface weeds are visible on the lake, but native submerged weeds are still present.

BRIAN MULHERIN | DAILY NEWS PHOTO

provement Board. "It was beginning to look like a swamp."

A survey in 2004 had the lake's milfoil cover at about 50 acres. Two years later, the milfoil cover had more than tripled.

THE TREATMENT

Mason County Drain Commissioner Dave Hasenbank said it was obvious the lake needed help.

"We knew, based upon the condition of the lake, when we inherited it that the flouridone (Sonar), the whole lake treatment was going to be the only option, but in the first year of establishment, we couldn't do that," Hasenbank said of the lake improvement board's formation in 2006. "The DNRE requires one year's worth of testing and sampling before you can even apply for that, so we needed to do something to give the property owners some relief in that first year and kind of as an experiment we put a small amount of money into weevils as test plots to give the board a better feeling. We felt if the weevils were ever going to work, they would work there because there's so much undeveloped shoreline to give them a place to overwinter."

instead 130 acres came back," Jones said.

The lake improvement board had exercised the nuclear option in the war against milfoil and lost.

Jones said the only thing left to try was granular 2,4d applied directly to the beds.

The results were better than anyone dared hope.

"It's cleared itself right up," Polacek said. "We're in good shape right now. The fishing picked up and of course the boaters are happy."

Whether the weed has been eradicated is up for debate, but Polacek is very pleased. Jones did two surveys on 100 coordinates on the lake and found no signs of the weed returning in June and August.

"People have asked me, 'Do you think it will ever be at scale it once was?' I say 'Hopefully not,'" Jones said.

"This year we really didn't have to do anything," Polacek said "That's pretty good success. We spent quite a bit of money on it. We were spending \$37,000 a year on it to take care of those weeds."

Although there were some cost overruns in 2008, there's still a sizable fund balance left from this year's assessments.

Round Lake area landowners will get a chance to speak about the issue again next summer when a series of public meetings are required before another assessment can be levied.

Jones said she's not expecting the lake to go back to its 2007 form unless there's some kind of catastrophic seed bank germination from seeds dormant in the lake's bottom.

"My hope is, from this point forward, it's basically a clean slate for the lake," Jones said.

She said as long as there are regular surveys and action when warranted, the lake should not get back to its weed-choked form.

That should cost less for landowners, too.

"Our goal is to reduce assessments to the point where should something happen and they need to do something about it, they can still do that, but they're not going to be to the point where they've been," Jones said.

It's too early to say where Round

Lake's assessment levels might fall, but she said Bear Lake's assessments went from \$600 down to \$20 per lot after a similar sequence of events.

Jones said for now, she's just pleased they were able to get the lake under control.

"I've worked on a lot of lakes around the entire state and we've used every type of control imaginable," Jones said. "This is the one lake that, as much as I would have liked to have seen it this way, I just didn't think it was possible."

HACKERT LAKE

The Hackert Lake Improvement Board contracted with Enviroscience to plant weevils again in 2010. About 12,000 weevils were planted in June of this year, specifically to control Eurasian watermilfoil. Although the contract called for only 9,000 weevils, an additional 3,000 were included at no additional charge. Hackert received similar plantings in 2005, 2006 and 2007, according to a press release from the Hackert Lake Association. No information on acreages was immediately available, but a newsletter described the milfoil as "significantly reduced."

The lake is also the subject of water quality monitoring by West Shore Community College under the direction of Dr. Mike McKinney.

LINCOLN LAKE

The Lincoln Lake Improvement board has used a variety of tactics to battle thick weed growth, but Jones said the problem seems to be more nutrient-driven than invasive species driven. Although there's flow into the lake that brings nutrients, the base flow of the lake is low, meaning nutrients stay in the lake and any vegetation in the lake grows very well.

In addition to cutting with mechanical weed harvesters and treating with chemicals, two inlets to the lake are being monitored for incoming nutrients.

"It's come a long way in a couple of years but it was something so impaired to begin with that it will continue to show improvement, but it's not going to (turn around like round lake)," Jones said.



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Daily 3 5-8-9
Daily 4 3-2-4-5
Fantasy 5 1-4-9-10-24
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Friday's Mega Millions jackpot is: \$16 million.
Saturday's Classic Lotto 47 jackpot is: \$1.3 million.

GETTING IT STRAIGHT

OUR POLICY

We strive to be accurate. If there is an inaccuracy, we will correct or clarify errors. If there is an error, contact Steve Begnoche, managing editor, by calling the Ludington Daily News at 845-5181 x326.

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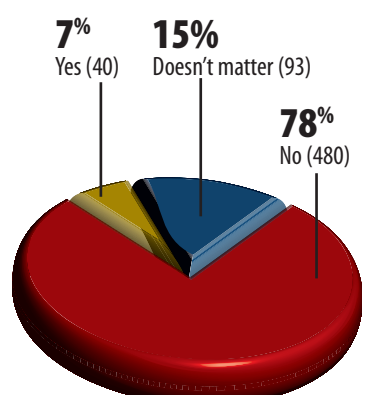
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QUICK POLL

TELLING US WHAT YOU THINK

YESTERDAY'S QUESTION:
Is a movie being 3D a big draw for you?
Total Votes: 613



TODAY'S QUESTION:
Do you feel like you got your "money's worth" out of June, July and August, as far as a good summer is concerned?
Visit www.ludingtondailynews.com and let us know.