

SYLVAN / OTTER LAKES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

www.sylvanotter.org

2026

Mission statement:

The Sylvan Otter Lake Association (SOLA) is a non-profit organization, comprised of volunteers to improve our lake community and protect the quality of our lakes for their safe recreational use. SOLA's main focus is to provide the best quality lake environment for all who use both Sylvan / Otter Lakes by managing the weeds and wildlife.

Stay more informed about Sylvan Otter Lake weed treatments & activities.

I receive many calls about your dislike of our current notification system of posting yellow signs on properties 1 or 2 days prior to treating the lake. You have requested more notification. The current system will remain in effect but in addition **we have added a map of our lakes to the SOLA website. Each area of the lake is identified by a number.** We will send out an email blast to let you know that we are treating specific areas, listed by number. **Please go to our website under the newsletter section and enter your name, street address and your email address.** By doing this, we will be able to notify you via email a few days sooner as to when the lake is scheduled to be treated for weeds. We will be able to use this notification system to inform you of other activities going on around the lake as well.

Weed treatment: Last year I reported that Aqua Weed Control was going to use a drone to survey our lakes for weeds. The first attempt to use the drone failed due to our close proximity to Oakland County Airport. After receiving proper approvals, they were able to use the drone effectively, which saves a lot of time surveying the lakes for weeds. I'm very impressed with the level of detail the drone camera can give us at the surface of the lake from such a high elevation so as to minimize the noise to residents below.

SOLA would like to inform you that by the time you are receiving this letter, we have already sprayed the canals & lakes three times and are getting ready for a fourth application to try and keep our lakes as weed free as possible. Please let us know if there are weeds in your area via the website. Even with the drone, we can't see everything and patches pop up quickly in this hot weather. We will be more than happy to treat the area of concern so as to minimize the spread of weeds in our lakes, provided residents in your area have donated enough to cover the cost to treat your area. Thank you for your assistance.

Wildlife management: As was mentioned in past newsletters, this year the state of Michigan has implemented changes to the wildlife management program. In early spring with the assistance of our private contractor we were able to harvest a record breaking number of goose eggs and nests. Additionally, in late June, again under the direction of the state, we were able to have a goose round up. We were able to round up over 121 geese that were relocated up north to a wildlife sanctuary. I would like to especially thank Luke Cassar for his attention to detail regarding this matter as there were only two wildlife management permits awarded this year by the state, of which Sylvan and Otter Lakes was one of them. This state directed program reduces beach closures due to high fecal / E. coli count in the water as well as eliminates the mess geese leave in your yards. Thank you Luke.

In an effort to control cost, and since we have such a good website full of great useful information, the officers of Sylvan Otter Lakes Association have decided to reduce the length of the yearly newsletter and only send out donation requests to fund the programs that we support. If however a note worthy topic arises, we will add a card to the donation request suggesting you to go to the website to be informed.

Moving on: 45 years ago I took over as the lake president. In these 45 years our association has accomplished many great things. When we needed more money to fund the programs that we support, instead of raising the donation amount which would have been the easy thing to do, we worked harder to increase the number of residents to donate. With your help, we have been able to better manage the wild life and weeds in our lakes. What I am most proud of over these 45 years is that the SOLA did not create any new rules or regulations to abide by! Sylvan & Otter Lakes are all sports lakes and we MUST accommodate all water sports and activities. I would like to thank several people for their volunteer service over the years. Specifically, Todd Eddy for his many many years as vice president and treasurer. Todd has agreed to step up as your new President. He has the experience, is a great leader, and a logical choice. Greg Rademacher, your VP, has been a great sounding board over the years. Greg let us know just recently that he will be stepping down to take another role with his street association to improve the lakes. Additionally, I would like to thank Jeff Ignatowski for his time creating and maintaining our website and keeping it current as an excellent resource for all lake information. Jeff has agreed to take on the VP role, replacing Greg as well as managing our IT needs. Thank you to the City of Sylvan Lake that has been a strong supporter of everything we've done. Without their help a lot of what we've accomplished would not have been possible. To Luke Cassar for all of his hard work and persistence working with the DNR on our wildlife management programs. Finally, to Kim Yeip who has done a great job of managing and recording your donations. I am leaving SOLA financially sound, thanks to your support over the years.

Going forward the new board members are:

- Todd Eddy – President of SOLA-- toddeddy@comcast.net
- Jeff Ignatowski – Vice President- Web-site for SOLA -jignatowski@gmail.com
- Luke Cassar - Wildlife Management of SOLA -- cassar@reagan.com
- Kim Yeip –Treasurer of SOLA -- kimyeip@gmail.com

DONATION SCHEDULE:

LAKEFRONT, CANAL FRONT, OR BOAT OWNER	Minimum of \$75.00
RESIDENT WITH BEACH PRIVILEGES	Minimum of \$25.00

Make checks payable to:

**Sylvan / Otter Lake Association
P.O. Box 136
Keego Harbor, MI 48320**

Treasurer's report for 2025:

Beginning balance	\$ 31,633.00
Donations	\$ 27,955.00
Weed control and permits	\$ 24,332.00
Printing costs and postage fees	\$ 1,853.00
Wildlife management programs	\$ 740.00
Web site host, misc. fees	\$ 600.00
Legal	\$ 126.00
Bank fees	\$ 42.00
USPS & Bank fees	\$ 649.00
Total expenses	\$ 28,342.00
Ending balance	\$ 31,246.00

Zelle: Thank you to those of you who used Zelle for the first time to make your donation. However, we learned that unless you add your address in the “**What’s this for**” field, it adds a lot of time to Kim’s job trying to make sure your donation is recorded properly.

Please add your address to your Zelle donation. Thank you.

We are always looking for volunteers: If you have the same passion for protecting our lakes and are willing to donate a few hours (mainly in the summer) to continue what we have worked so many years to accomplish, please send us an email and someone with the new board will contact you. Thank you.

Lastly, I would like to say thank you to the many great residents of our Sylvan Otter Lakes Association that I have gotten to know over the years. Without your input and support, Sylvan & Otter Lakes would not be one of the best lakes in Oakland County!

Thank you.

Phil Thomas

Sylvan Otter Lakes Association President

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