

Lake Miltona



SPRING News

May 2021

lake-miltona.org

Volume 1, No. 29

Directors and Officers are listed below. Please thank them for volunteering their time for the Lake Miltona Community.

OFFICERS:

President: Steve DeSutter
 Vice President: Marc Bot
 Treasurer: Bob Larson
 Secretary: Gene Rose

DIRECTORS:

Lynn Glesne, Dave Werpy Area 1
 John Fair Area 2A
 Jack Anderson Area 2B
 John Fay Area 2C
 Skeeter Kingsberg Area 3A
 Vern Suhr Area 3B
 Gene Rose Area 3C

DIRECTORS continued:

Steve Herth Area 4
 Emily Yonke Area 5
 Shannon Burgad Area 6
 William Moeller Area 7
 Carol McCarthy, Gary Fuchs Area 8
 Jerry Fulton Area 9
 Jerry Fulton Area 10
 Pat Ferguson Area 11
 Mike Wrobel, Warren Davis Area 12
 Ted Boehne, Tom Brauer Area 13
 Tom Struthers Area 14
 Wally Roberts Area 15
 Anne Rykken Area 16
 Marc Bot, Bob Larson, Steve DeSutter Area 17
 Randy Hansen Area 18
 Don Henning Area 19

A Message from the President

It's been a long time since we had a chance to meet as a group and get the process moving to have our regular business recommence. It has truly been a time, that most of this generation, has not seen anything like what we have come through. With conditions improving and vaccinations becoming more prevalent, it seems like we are heading toward normal lake life this summer. We are looking forward to getting on with our business.

We are excited to be having the annual meeting at the Miltona Community Center hall this year. We have Dave Rush from Douglas County Land and Resources lined up with a lot of good information

to share with everyone. We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting. We will go over in detail what the association is doing for the membership.

The pontoon parade has been scheduled for the 4th of July. Since the 4th is on a Sunday, this year, hard to tell when people will be coming and going, so we decided to have it at noon on the 4th. The parade has been growing and it is a very fun event. If you have never done the parade, load up a boat and come check it out.

Our memberships continue to be very strong and please continue to encourage any new people moving to our lake to join the assn.

We did continue our business last year, even without meetings. We continued the lake monitoring

when we could and also did our fish stocking in the fall. We put in approximately 40,000 fingerlings in the lake in October. We will continue to stock the lake with Walleyes and can always use your help in financing this operation. Like most things, fish are not getting cheaper with time.

We are planning on having the annual fundraiser in mid-August, so we will be coming around selling you some tickets in June/July. We are scheduled for August 14th in Leaf Valley. Been a while since we could get together as a group, so if the government allows us to meet as a group, we will have the event.

See you on the lake. Good luck fishing!

Steve DeSutter
 President

Paid Memberships

Membership trend over the past seven years:

<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
437	421	458	438	456	472	475

Membership in the Lake Miliona Association is encouraged for those in our lake community as well as the general public.

A membership application is available on our website lake-miliona.org

**or contact us at
790 East Sandy Beach Drive NE
Miliona, MN 56354**

Lake Miliona Association is a volunteer not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation dedicated to water quality and ecological balance. DONATIONS AND DUES ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. See IRS Publication 526.

Annual Fundraiser 2021

**Saturday, August 14th, 2021
5:00pm - 10:00pm**

This year the event will be held in the
Leaf Valley Townhall

We are planning the event similar to the 2019 fundraiser with a buffet from 5:00-7:00 pm. and Raffle prizes from 7:00- 10:00 pm. Again, your area directors will be selling tickets during the summer at a price of \$20 each – children age 16 and under, accompanied by an adult, will be admitted at no charge.

**Northern Pike Regulations go into effect
May 11, 2019 for Douglas County**



North-central Zone: Bag limit 10 (Not more than 2 over 26". All from 22-26" must be immediately released.) Includes the Alexandria-Glenwood Management Area. Map included in the 2018 Minnesota Fishing Regulations booklet or: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/pike/index.html>

Annual Meeting 2021

Miliona Community Center

**Saturday, June 5th, 2021
9:00 a.m.**

We will also discuss projects we have done and are currently doing. Our guest speaker will be Dave Rush of the Douglas County Land and Resources. Refreshments will be served.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Lake Miliona Ice Dates for the Last 17 Years

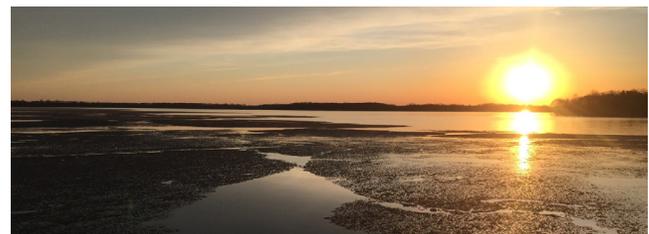
Board member Jerry Fulton has kept track of the ice completely on and ice completely out dates for the past 16 years. They are:

ICE ON

Dec 13, 2004
Nov 30, 2005
Dec 1, 2006
Nov 29, 2007
Nov 27, 2008
Dec 5, 2009
Nov 27, 2010
Dec 5, 2011
Dec 8, 2012
Nov 26, 2013
Nov 25, 2014
Dec 19, 2015
Dec 10, 2016
Dec 8, 2017
Nov 13, 2018
Dec 3, 2019
Nov 30, 2020

ICE OUT

Apr 14, 2005
Apr 10, 2006
Apr 20, 2007
May 4, 2008
Apr 23, 2009
Apr 1, 2010
Apr 26, 2011
Mar 25, 2012
May 14, 2013
Apr 27, 2014
Apr 12, 2015
Mar 31, 2016
May 6, 2017
May 6, 2018
April 24, 2019
April 20, 2020
April 6, 2021



Let's Go Fishing

"Making a Difference!"

Let's Go Fishing-Alexandria Lakes Area has served 19,446 guests on 1,933 fishing and boating excursions since 2007. Seniors, veterans, youth, and physically challenged individuals have experienced these on-the-water trips which bring smiles, joy, and enjoyment to them and the volunteers.

Volunteer Captains and crew members make this happen with the help of business, organization, and individual support. Volunteers are needed.

For more information about volunteering or supporting Let's Go Fishing call 320-760-9737. www.alexandria.lgfws.com

Let's Go Fishing thanks the Lake Milona Association for your support in helping "Make a Difference" in our guests lives.

Let's Go Fishing is a 501 C3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible. Federal EIN 82-4605910



Something New: An AquaWeed Stick Station

The Douglas County Land & Resource Management has placed an AquaWeed Stick Station at our east access. The AquaWeed Stick is a tool available to boaters that aids the removal of aquatic vegetation from boat trailers easier and faster than ever before. The station also has a bait disposal bin where boaters can discard unwanted baitfish in a compostable bag. However, please do not place trash, worms, pet waste, or other items in the baitfish disposal bin. A link to the Douglas County press release from last fall and a picture of the Lake Milona station is provided below."

<https://www.echopress.com/news/science-and-nature/6642423-New-weed-stick-allows-boaters-in-Douglas-County-to-quickly-remove-lake-invaders>

Thank you Douglas County Land & Resource Management folks for helping to keep Lake Milona clean.

Fish Stocking Report

We received a permit to stock 1300 pounds of walleye fingerlings from the Minnesota DNR in October.

We witnessed the weighing of the fish, and witnessed putting them into the lake this chilly October.

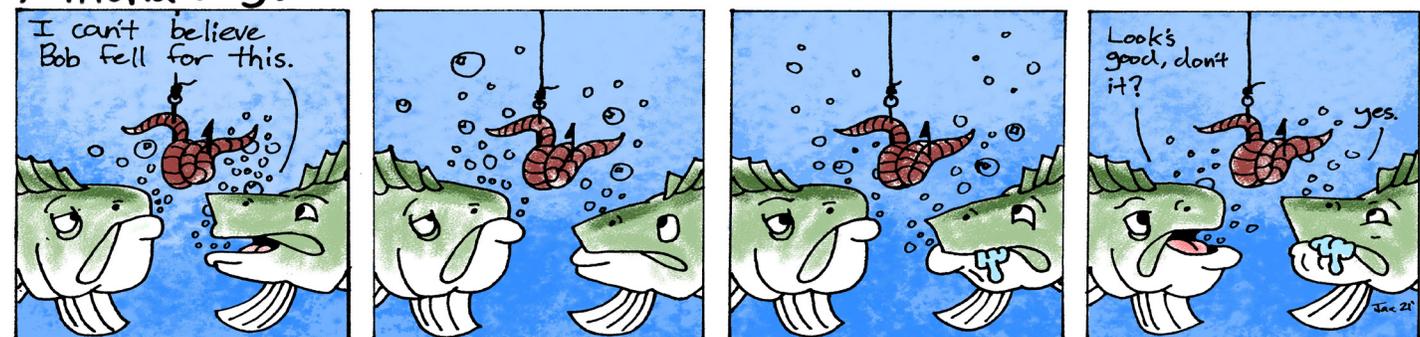
With the fish length of approximately 4-6 inch fingerlings, we put in around 24-35 fingerlings per pound.

So the total amount of fingerlings put in is about 40,000.

With the DNR limited on stocking due to covid and budgets, we want to continue our supplemental stocking of Lake Milona to ensure fish are being put in annually on a consistent basis.

We made a commitment to the grower to continue this process for 3 more years, permitting allowed, and will have fish available for us to put in. We have 3 more years under this agreement.

Milona Days



The Douglas County Water Quality Legacy Fund

The introductory fact sheet for this Fund states: "Clean water is vital to the health of our community. It is important to keep our water clean for our permanent and seasonal residents, annual tourists and future generations to come."

This Fund has begun support of this goal by providing matching funds for water quality projects that protect and restore our natural water resources in Douglas County, Minnesota. The Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation District and US Fish and Wildlife Services identify these projects. Three water quality projects have been completed, two are in progress and one will begin this fall. Matching support for these projects range from \$1000 to \$170,000. The projects supported include shoreline stabilization, wetland preservation, reduction

of phosphorus contamination of lake water. Without this Fund we would not be able to access several sources of public funds needed to complete these projects.

This 501(C)(3) fund is support by both private and public dollars. The Fund is looking forward to supporting more water quality projects in Douglas County. Donations are welcomed. More information on the Douglas County Water Quality Legacy Fund can be found on the DLCA web site under the heading "News" at <https://www.dclamn.org/douglas-county-water-quality-fund/>.

Annual Boat Parade Rules

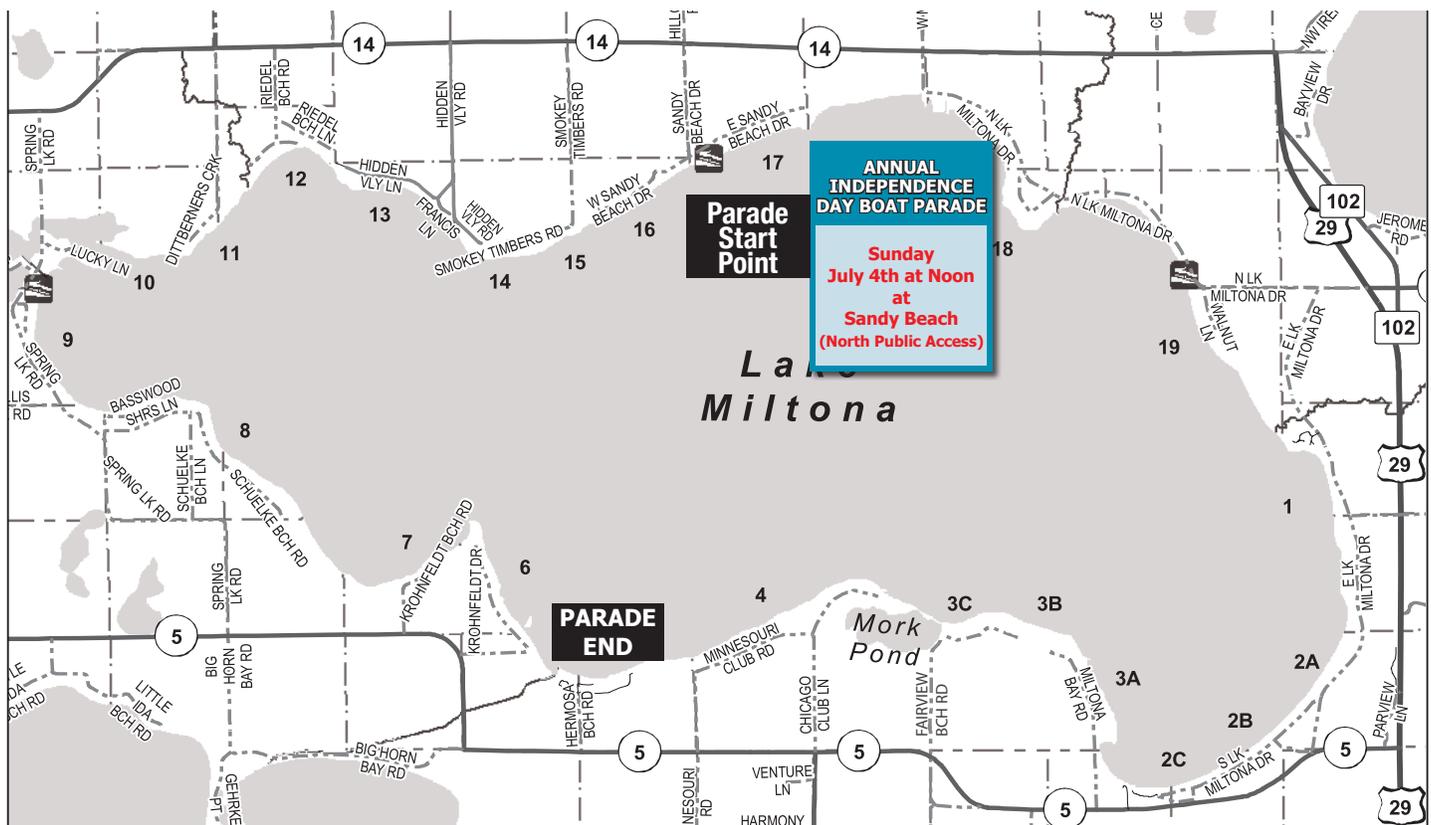
The Annual Independence Day Boat Parade will be Sunday, July 4th starting at Noon. In case of rain, parade will be Monday, July 5th at Noon.

It will start at Sandy Beach / North Public Access (See map).

Day of Registration: Register the day of the parade 1 hour before start time. On July 4th go to Sandy Beach / North Public Access. You will see a sign to register and will be given a registration number.

You **MUST** register for a chance to win a prize. As you approach the judges, stop the forward motion of your boat within 30 feet of the judges, show your registration number and proceed only when judges wave you on.

Route will be determined the day of the parade due to wind direction. Parade will end at Sand Bar on South side of Lake (Outlet to Ida Lake). First place boat & pontoon wins \$75. Second place boat & pontoon wins \$25. Personal Watercraft will also have a first and second place prize of \$75.00 and \$25.00. Names will be displayed on a plaque at LJ's restaurant in Miltona.



Loon Update

At our April 10th Lake Miliona Association Board meeting several members reported they had seen or heard loons during the week. According to the Audubon Field Guide "The rich yodeling and moaning calls, heard by day or night, are characteristic sounds of early summer in the north woods. In winter, silent and more subtly marked, Common Loons inhabit coastal waters and large southern lakes." (<https://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/common-loon#:~:text=Many%20people%20consider%20the%20loon,waters%20and%20large%20southern%20lakes.>) So, let's enjoy our loons and continue to help them.

Randy Hanson provided the Board with a timely update on the status of our loon nesting-platform program. Randy plans to put out 3 platforms in Tamarac Bay, historically two in the west end of Lake Miliona and Anne Rykken will be put one out in front of Smokey Timbers. Randy said that if anyone else is interested in putting platforms in and out of the water at new locations they should let him know. Randy can be contacted by phone at (320-491-4288) or email rhansen@midwestinfo.net.

Not all of our Lake Miliona loons use nesting-platforms. For example, for several years a platform was positioned in our lake by Mork's Pond. That nesting platform was never used, but parent loons with babies were seen in the area during the summers. We like to keep track of these successes. So, if you see loons with babies, please let Randy know where they were seen.

Last year in June the Echo Press published an article on loons by Christine Herwig entitled "Christine Herwig: Here's how to help Minnesota's loons". She is the Assistant Regional Manager for the Minnesota DNR's Northwest Region in the Ecological and Water Resources Division. Before taking that position, she was the DNR's nongame specialist for Northwest Minnesota. The reference for her article is:

<https://www.echopress.com/sports/outdoors/6536013-Christine-Herwig-Here%20%80%99s-how-to-help-Minnesota%20%80%99s-loons>

In first part of this article she provided an introduction to the life of loons. Then she went

on to provide an excellent overview of how we can help loons including information on when and how to use platforms for nesting. She noted that more platforms do not necessarily mean more loons since each pair will defend about 60 acres. Another way to help is to be sure our lakes have high water quality. She noted the reference "Score your Shore" on the DNR website, which we have used in our Lake Miliona water quality evaluations.



Loons are a bird most synonymous with the beauty of nature. Their sleek appearance and haunting calls defines the Minnesota lakes. While loon populations in Minnesota are doing well, they sometimes have a problem nesting in areas with fluctuating water levels and developed shorelines. To remedy this problem for our loon friends, several loon nest platforms have been built and strategically placed around Lake Miliona.

One of the best ways to encourage loons and other water birds to visit your favorite lakeshore is to allow deadfall trees to remain where they've naturally toppled into the water. Deadfalls attract a variety of aquatic prey, including insects and fish, and water birds often use these structures for fishing. Human anglers may enjoy the benefits of these habitats as well.

We ask as you motor about on the lake, if you see a loon nest or something odd that may in fact be a loon nest, please DO NOT DRIVE YOUR BOAT RIGHT UP TO IT. Loon parents, after laying their eggs, have been known to abandon their nest and eggs if they feel threatened.

The platforms are placed near bulrushes in shallow water where bass fishing is popular. Please do not fish by the platforms! Lake Miliona has enough bulrushes not near a loon platform, please be respectful of the loons homes.

Right now, the nest platforms are pretty visible as the bulrushes they've been set within, are not fully grown. But, the loons are claiming their nesting area and preparing to lay their eggs. The loons are fascinating to watch, but PLEASE give them plenty of space so they can raise their families safely.

Nelson Lake Drainage Project

The Lake Miltona Association (LMA) and the Douglas County Lakes Association (DCLA) recently became aware of a proposed Nelson Lake drainage project. Nelson Lake is located in Otter Tail County just west of Parkers Prairie. Nelson Lake is considered to be a non-contributing basin to downstream flooding. However, Nelson Lake is experiencing high water that is flooding Otter Tail County Road 6, agricultural lands and building sites.

A project has been proposed to drain 36 inches of water out of Nelson Lake into Fish Lake. However, by connecting Nelson Lake to Fish Lake this drainage will contribute to the watershed downstream, which includes drainage into Lake Miltona via Dittberners Creek. This is a concern to the Lake Miltona Association because of the high levels of phosphorus in Nelson Lake. For example, the DNR web page for Nelson Lake states: "Not always suitable for swimming and wading due to low clarity or excessive algae caused by the presence of nutrients such as phosphorus in the water."

Should this project be approved, the effects of the drainage project should also be taken into consideration in the Long Prairie Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan being developed by the One Watershed One Plan program. Ideally, this

evaluation would be accomplished prior to starting excavating the ditch/pipe. We would like some assurance that this would happen.

Houston Engineering, Inc. has developed a plan for this project. (See <https://ottertailcountymn.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Preliminary-Engineers-Report-proposed-Ditch-71-04-12-2021.pdf>) Their report, p. 25, totally dismisses the phosphorus as an issue to consider. Here are two quotes from p. 25: (1) "Therefore, the proposed Nelson Lake outlet would have little to no measurable effect on the phosphorus concentrations in Fish, Twin and Miltona Lakes." and (2) "In addition, it is four miles from Twin Lake to Lake Miltona, so the possibility of additional phosphorus reaching Miltona and having an effect is very minimal." We question these conclusions and have addressed them in several letters.

This additional phosphorus is also a particular concern to the DCLA since Lake Miltona water drains into Lake Ida. The Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSW) is currently managing a \$900,000 project to mitigate the phosphorus entering Lake Ida from wildlife wetlands that were used as a settling pond for Douglas County Ditch 23. This project is being supported by a grant from the Minnesota Water Quality Legacy Fund and matching funds from Douglas County residents.

Invasive Species Lake Monitoring

Justin Swart from the Douglas County Land and Resources suggested that our Lake Association reduce our extra AIS inspection hours at our main East access due to the number of hours that will be provided at that site by the DNR and the County. This would reduce our normal \$2500 cost for extra hours of inspection authorized in earlier years (see January 13, 2018 minutes) to \$1300. The Board agreed that this inspection was valuable to continue due to the number of potential vegetative invasive species that could enter Lake Miltona. Therefore, a contract was submitted to Justin Swart for extra inspections hours in the invasive species-monitoring program during the 2021 summer up a total cost of \$1300. These inspections will take place at all of our lake access sites. The schedule will be coordinated with the DNR and County inspections and anticipated use of each access sites.

Douglas County Lakes Association Updates

The following updates were reported at our April 10, 2021 Lake Miltona Association Board meeting: (1) A One Watershed – One Plan (1W-1P) has been authorized for the Long Prairie River. Steve Henry is the Douglas County Lakes Association (DCLA) representative on this Committee. A link for more information on this plan can be found on the Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation District web page. (2) The Alexandria Lake Area Sanitary District (ALASD) has formed a committee to address the chloride pollution issue as required by the variance issued to it by the MPCA. Gene Rose is the DCLA representative on this committee. Details on this committee can be found on the ALSAD web page. (3) The Cowdry-Taylor-Stony-Union Lake Association joined the DCLA. The DCLA now has 25 lake association members. All active members of every affiliate county lake associations are entitled to vote at the DCLA annual meeting in September. During the rest of the year each member association selects one member to represent it at DCLA Board meetings. (4) The DCLA reviewed an inter-county newsletter, but decided not to participate. (For information on this newsletter check it out at the address: www.lakeadmin.org).

Smoke Signals from the Camp

THANK YOU Lake Miltona Association and all the lake residents who continue being such a huge part in bringing about more and more exciting happenings at Smokey Timbers!

2020 was certainly a unique and challenging year everywhere and the Camp was no exception. Youth events were few and far between as organizations canceled virtually all types of group activities. Several family groups with advance registrations canceled their plans as well. And, sadly, there was no traditional Annual Fish Fry.

There were, however, bright sides to the year. Three Eagle Scouts were able to carry out grounds improvement projects which were very beneficial to the Camp. By the end of June restless families began looking in earnest for things to do together and family groups pretty well filled out the weekends into mid-September. Numerous "Friends of the Camp" decided, fish or no fish, Smokey Timbers needs our support and provided most welcome financial support. On Halloween a "Spooky Trails" family event was held which proved to be a big hit and most likely to return in 2021 by popular demand.

2021 is looking to be far more exciting. The newly winterized bunkhouse was initiated with a

Scout Winter Camp in February. In March, despite the loss of appropriate winter conditions, a 5K Family Challenge event took place. Lake Association assistance was most helpful in assuring a good time for all who attended. Family Group reservations have already virtually filled all weekends from Memorial Day through mid-September. Despite some continuing uncertainty about what will and will not be approved for them, youth groups are beginning to commit to tentative reservations. The variety of groups is encouraging – schools, Boy and Girl Scouts, Community Education, 4H, church youth, etc.

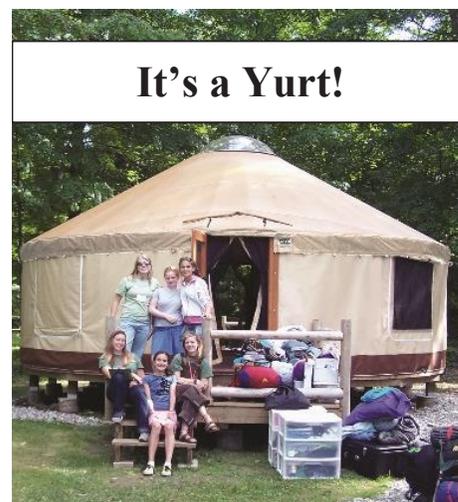
AND, THE ANNUAL FISH FRY FOR LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS IS SCHEDULED FOR SAT., AUG. 7TH.

Adding to the 2021 excitement at the Camp are several facility improvement projects that are being pursued. Accommodation options will be enhanced by the completion of a camper cabin and a cabin-sized Yurt. These structures will be available for four-season use. A large Yurt will offer groups numerous activity options in a classroom-sized, year around, all-weather shelter. In addition to these structures, two permanent group activity sites are being developed. Funding of material costs for these projects has been provided by Foundations, family trusts, civic organizations and individuals. Construction will be

done primarily by volunteers. The Smokey Timbers Foundation is grateful to all of the people who are making these improvements possible.

The preservation, continuing improvement and future of Smokey Timbers, has been, and will forever be, a "Labor of Love" by caring, committed and dedicated people. Primarily the accomplishments have been and continue to be underwritten by local folks who witness and conclude the Foundation's mission, values and aspirations are a fit for them. Assistance of any sort – financial, goods, volunteer services as a "Friend of the Camp" – is always gratefully appreciated. Contributions are documented and qualify as tax deductible per IRS code, Section 170. Folks with questions or interest in how they can help are encouraged to call 320-766-5290. The Camp's mailing address is 15567 Smokey Timbers Rd. Miltona, MN 56354. Additional info is available at smokeytimbers.org.

It's a Yurt!



LAKE MILTONA

ASSOCIATION

790 East Sandy Beach Drive NE
Miltona, MN 56354

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Lake Miltona News

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2021 Calendar of Events

June 5	Annual Meeting	9:00 am
July 4	Boat Parade	Noon
July 17	Directors Meeting	9:00 am
August 14	Annual Fundraiser	5-10:00 pm
October 15	Directors Meeting	9:00 am