

Lake Miltona

lake-miltona.org



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

OFFICERS:

President:
Vice President:
Treasurer:
Secretary:

Steve DeSutter
Shannon Burgad
Chad Koebnick
Janet Guinn

DIRECTORS:

Mark Niedenfuer
John Fair
Janet Zastrow
John Fay
Jeff Anderson
Vern Suhr
Gene Rose
Steve Herth

Area 1
Area 2A
Area 2B
Area 2C
Area 3A
Area 3B
Area 3C
Area 4

DIRECTORS *continued:*

Heath Hinsch	Area 5
Shannon Burgad	Area 6
Bob Streasick	Area 7
Janet Guinn, Gary Fuchs	Area 8
Jay Sieling	Area 9
Jay Sieling	Area 10
Open	Area 11
Mike Wrobel	Area 12
Ted Boehne, Tom & Cheryl Brauer	Area 13
Tom Struthers	Area 14
Brad Roberts	Area 15
Steve Labatt	Area 16
Steve DeSutter, Chad Koebnick, Tim Kaatz	Area 17
Randy Hansen	Area 18
Don Henning	Area 19

A Message from the President

Welcome to Spring. We had a pretty normal winter and normal moisture. The lake level seems to be about normal, if there is such a thing.

We are excited to be having the annual meeting June 7th at the Miltona Community Center Hall this year. We have some good speakers lined up with a lot of good information to share with everyone. We have a couple big of projects ahead of us, and we look forward to telling you about them 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 Friday, this year, it should be a great time. Since it seems to like raining on the 4th lately, let's hope for good weather and a great turnout. 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 are planning on having the annual fundraiser in Leaf Valley on August 9th, so we will be coming around selling you some tickets in June/July. Hoping to see you there this year.

Fishing has seemed to improve over the last couple of years, based on multiple reports around the lake, and we look forward to continuing our

SPRING News

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stocking efforts. We are convinced that stocking has improved our fishing success lately. We would like to increase our stocking levels, but we need your help in contributing to the fish stocking fund. Please consider increasing your walleye stocking donations, so we can stock greater numbers of Walleye fingerlings.

Check out the new website to pay your dues / walleye stocking / invasive species contributions.

www.lake-miltona.org

See you on the lake. Good luck fishing!

Steve DeSutter
President

Annual Fundraiser 2025

Saturday, August 9th, 2025

5:00pm - 10:00pm

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

We are planning the event similar to the 2024 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.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS)

To support AIS prevention on Lake Miltona, Douglas County Land & Resource Management will again be installing an Aqua Weed Still tool at the northeast access. To support early detection of AIS, the county is partnering with Blue Water Science to conduct an early detection monitoring survey across the lake this summer. Fortunately, at this time only Zebra Mussels have been identified in Lake Miltona but in lakes across Douglas County, Zebra Mussels and other AIS have been identified: Eurasian Watermilfoil, Curly Leaf Pondweed, Flowering Rush and Signal Crayfish. The majority of funding the county receives to prevent and treat AIS comes from the state of MN AIS Prevention Aid program which has been recommended to be phased out by 2029. Should the state legislature approve this budget cut, the local AIS program in Douglas County will be impacted, which could lead to an increase in expenditure's for our association. The Lake Miltona Association board is monitoring this closely.

To learn more regarding AIS in Douglas County, please refer to the new AIS GIS online hub* where you can learn about AIS infestation status, aquatic plant survey reports, AIS identification resources, MN DNR lake resources, and more for area lakes. Thank you for continuing to be vigilant in preventing the spread of AIS.

* Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Douglas County, MN

Paste this link: <https://dcpw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=c8ea6b30e74a453ea37cb49e98bd15f7>.

Lake Miltona Ice Dates for the Last 18 Years

Board members have been keeping track of the ice completely on and ice completely out dates for many years. Jay Sieling has done this for the last 4 years. Lets encourage him to continue.

ICE ON	ICE OUT
Dec 13, 2004	Apr 14, 2005
Nov 30, 2005	Apr 10, 2006
Dec 1, 2006	Apr 20, 2007
Nov 29, 2007	May 4, 2008
Nov 27, 2008	Apr 23, 2009
Dec 5, 2009	Apr 1, 2010
Nov 27, 2010	Apr 26, 2011
Dec 5, 2011	Mar 25, 2012
Dec 8, 2012	May 14, 2013
Nov 26, 2013	Apr 27, 2014
Nov 25, 2014	Apr 12, 2015
Dec 19, 2015	Mar 31, 2016
Dec 10, 2016	May 6, 2017
Dec 8, 2017	May 6, 2018
Nov 13, 2018	April 24, 2019
Dec 3, 2019	April 20, 2020
Nov 30, 2020	April 6, 2021
Dec 7, 2021	May 4, 2022
Dec 1, 2022	May 5, 2023
Jan 4, 2023 (* Yes 2023)	Mar 16, 2024
Dec 2, 2024	Apr 14, 2025

Paid Memberships

Membership trend over the past seven years:

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
438	456	472	475	488	488	455
2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
478	000	000	000	000	000	000

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

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

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

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

Meet the New Lake Miltona Conservation Officer, Jake Homan

A question-and-answer session with Jake offered a little insight into what a State Conservation Officer's duties and daily activities are.

q. Jake - What interested you in becoming a State Conservation Officer and how long have you been a Conservation Officer?

a. I grew up in the Douglas County area, hunting and fishing with family. I have always had a passion for working with people and grew up in a law enforcement family and thought that being a Conservation Officer would be a terrific way to address all the things that I enjoy.

q. What does your patrol area or region consist of?

a. My station is the Alexandria Station. I cover a good chunk of Douglas County. Specifically, my station is from Nelson on the east to Brandon on the west. My north boundary is the Otter Tail County line, and my south boundary is the Pope County Line.

q. What does a typical day of a Conservation Officer consist of? I know it is just not fish and game, but there are other areas within the responsibilities a CO is responsible for.

a. There really is not a typical day, every day is different. This is one of the reasons I enjoy my job. In the morning, I may be checking anglers on area lakes or people hunting. By afternoon I may be assisting a local law enforcement agency with an ongoing call. First and foremost, my main priority is public safety. Conservation Officers are peace officers who have a focus on enforcing fish and game laws, recreation vehicle laws, wetland violations, and a variety of other laws.

q. Another topic of water safety, Personal Watercraft's (PWC) capacity. Whether the PWC is a two person or three person that is towing a tube. How does the riders on the tube affect how many people can be on the PWC?

a. Each PWC has different capacity. A tuber counts for the total capacity of the PWC.

q. New legislation regarding winter rules with regards to leaving trash and waste on the ice. Would you explain the new laws that went into effect.

a. No one on the lake can leave litter on the ice. There are many different forms of litter from cigarette butts to any form of debris. We ask that you place all trash in a garbage container secured to the shelter or on a motor vehicle. We do not want this litter left directly on the ice or in the water. We all want clean lakes, please do your part in helping keep Lake Miltona clean.

Jake Homan, Cont.

q. How about OWN your WAKE. We have seen a significant increase in WAKE boats on Lake Miltona. What are the rules about the wake these boats create and how it effects the shoreline erosion. Are there minimum distance requirements from the shore or other boats.

a. There is minimum distance that these boats should be operating from the shoreline, that is 200 feet. OWN your Wake refers to the damage that your wake can cause to the shoreline or other boats. We ask that people be cognizant of their wake and attempt to avoid areas where people are swimming, floating, or fishing out of respect for their neighbors.

q. Any closing comments you would like to add?

a. I appreciate all the time and effort you all put into making Lake Miltona a great spot to fish and recreate! I look forward to seeing you all out on the water!



Jake Homan with his daughter

NEW Boating Requirement Ages

AGE OF OPERATORS

Starting July 1, 2025, a new law will require operators 21 years and younger to possess a valid watercraft operator's permit for motorboats and personal watercraft. Adults born on or after July 1, 2004, must hold a permit to operate motorboats and PWC. The requirement is expanding over the following three years to include older age groups. Youth operators, younger than 12 years of age, may operate motorboats with less than 75 horsepower if an accompanying operator is in the motorboat. The law is designed to improve water safety by ensuring that all operators are properly trained, with full enforcement in place by 2028. See mndnr.gov/boating-safety for more information.

The following is the implementation schedule:

Born on or after the following dates:

July 1, 2004 (effective July 1, 2025)

July 1, 2000 (effective July 1, 2006)

July 1, 1996 (effective July 1, 2027)

July 1, 1987 (effective July 1, 2028)

Annual Boat Parade Rules

The Annual Independence Day Boat Parade will be Friday, July 4th starting at Noon. Rain or Shine parade goes on. It will start at Sandy Beach / North Public Access (See map).

Advance Registration:
Please register in advance of the parade by emailing Julie Hansen at julieh@midwestinfo.net. Julie will assign a registration number that can be printed on 8.5x 11 paper. Make sure the printed number is a large enough font to be read by the judges at about 30 yards. We prefer advance registration, but we will also be registering 1 hour before the parade.

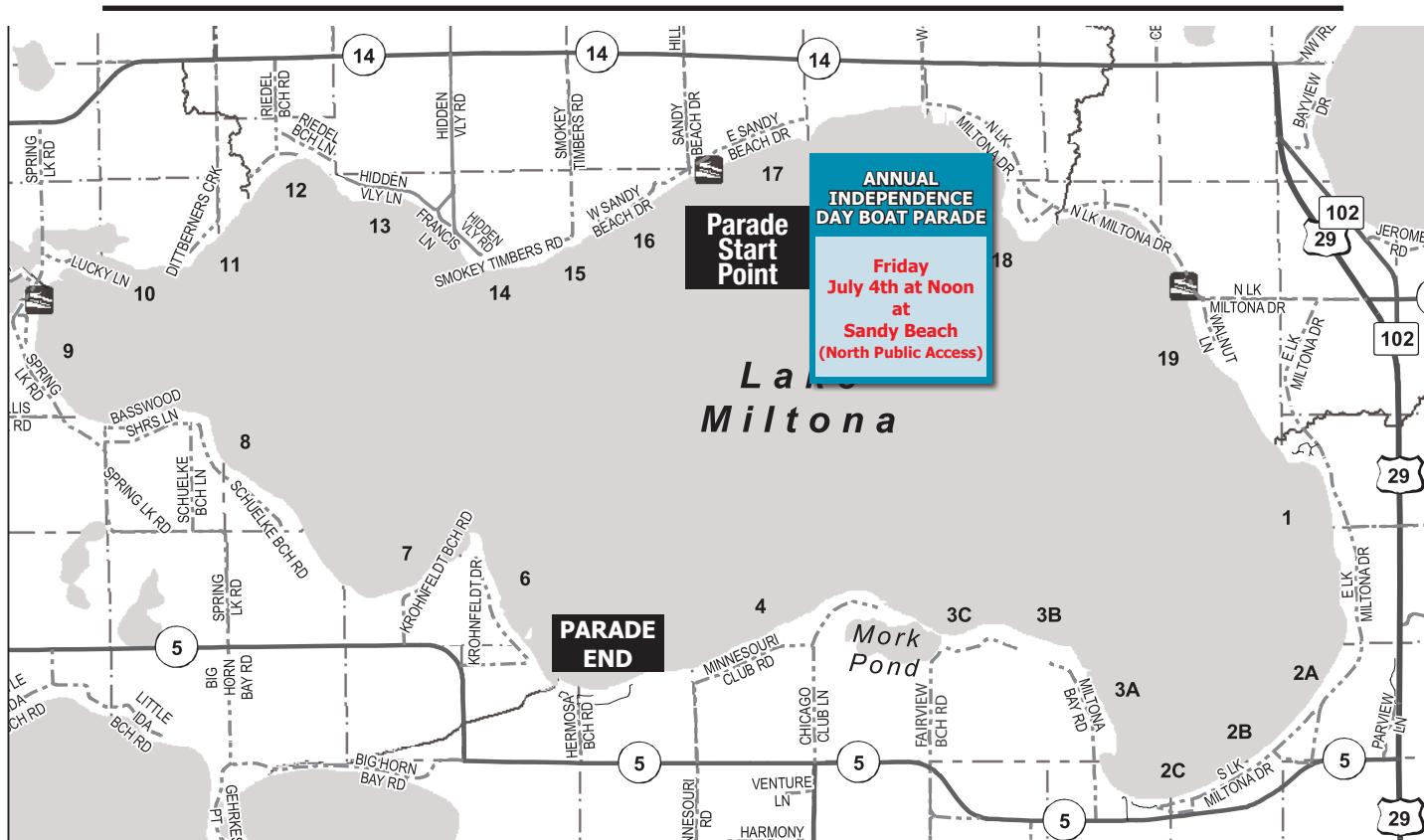
Day of Parade Registration:

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 at the end of parade, 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, and personal

watercraft wins \$75. 2nd and 3rd place pontoon wins \$25 and 2nd place boat wins \$25. Names will be displayed on a plaque at The Leaf Valley Mercantile under the Busch Light sign County Rd 6 Wall.



Loon Update

We have six loon nesting platforms deployed on the lake located as follows; off the point to the west of the east landing, the east side of Tamarac Bay, the west side of Tamarac Bay, Smokey Timbers, west side of the west bay and to the east of the sand bar. In the past loons have nested on three of the platforms. I think we have at least 9 loon nests on the lake. We believe that we have increased the nesting pairs of loons on the lake by 3. The other 3 nesting platforms are in the following locations; the west end of the Gold Coast, south side mid-lake (Chicago Club Road), and the point west of the northeast landing. We redeploy platforms each year depending on loon usage. If a platform is too close to a natural nest, the platform will not be used as it is within the natural loon nesting territory. If you want to take responsibility for deploying a platform each year please contact Randy Hansen at 320-491-2488.

Please, 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 Miltona has enough bulrushes not near a loon platform, please be respectful of the loon 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.



Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 7th, 2025

9:00am

Miltona Community Center

Our annual meeting will be held Saturday, June 7th, 2025 at the Miltona Community Center.

Fish Stocking Report

We received a permit to stock 1000 pounds of walleye fingerlings from the Minnesota DNR last October. We witnessed the weighing of the fish, and witnessed putting them into the lake this past 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 was about 35,000. With the DNR limited on stocking due to lack of stocking ponds and budgets, we want to continue our supplemental stocking of Lake Miltona to ensure Walleye's are being put in annually on a consistent basis. For this year, the board has approved to go back to stocking 1000 pounds of fingerlings. This was due to our fish stocking funds available. Please consider donating extra money with your dues to our fish stocking account. With your continued support, we are hoping to extend the number of fish stocked in the future. We are hoping to raise an additional \$10,000 to increase our levels of Walleye fingerlings. This is over and above what we normally do, and we cannot do this without your contributions. **Please help us reach this goal.**

Lake Miltona Natural Gas Update

At this time there are no future plans in the works to continue with installing Natural Gas around Lake Miltona. The map below shows the yellow line where Natural gas is currently. The company said if people are interested in getting Natural Service put in their area, they need to call and request it. **If enough people call** and say they would like the service, Lakes Region Energy Services would then make a motion to their board to request the service be extended around the lake your area. Please call if you want Natural service on Lake Miltona.

Lakes Region Energy Services, Perham, MN.
CALL: 218-863-9813.



Lake Miltona Association Webpage

Our Fall, November 2024 "Lake Miltona News" reported that our website is now fully operational. Some of the details of our new web site were reviewed. We hope you have enjoyed trying it out.

One of the new features that may be useful to our members is being able to pay dues & walleye donations online. We have the same email address, so simply typing in "Lake Miltona Association" in your web browser will bring you to:

<https://lake-miltona.org/.>

We plan to continue to review the contents and format of this new web site to see what additions or deletions or organizational changes we wish to make. Janet Guinn and Gene Rose will work with Jeff Meland on this process.

Smoke Signals from the Camp

Last year's season wrapped up with the Halloween events. Unfortunately, the Frozen Trails event planned for mid-winter 2025 did not take place due to the weather and lack of snow. Hopefully next winter will be more cooperative.

The rest of the 2025 season at Smokey Timbers Camp is shaping up to be a busy and exciting year.

Our mission is to provide camping and outdoor experiences for youth (includes college age) and families. In keeping with our mission, many of the 2025 summer weekends have been booked with a few openings remaining. The rentals are usually for two plus days which leaves the middle of the week pretty much open and would be available for interested parties. Rental includes use of the entire camp and its' facilities except for the Camper Cabin and Small Yurt for which there is an additional fee. Additional information is available under the "Rental Section" on the SmokeyTimbers.org web site.

FIKA (a Swedish tradition to meet and greet) is back by popular demand. It is scheduled to begin Wednesday June 4th and will go through August 20th. There will not be a FIKA on July 2nd. FIKA begins at 10am and is held on the deck of the screen porch. There is no cost to attend. Come by boat, car, etc.

Smoke Signals from the Camp (Cont)

to meet your neighbors and enjoy conversation, coffee and treats.

Mini Camps will again be offered this summer starting in June and going into August. There are some repeats and some new offerings. The following are some of the camps to be offered. They include Lake Surfing for Kids, Backyard Chickens for Beginners, Building Terrariums, Zebco School of Fish, Beekeeping for Beginners, Barkcarving (woodcarving), Foraging for Medicinal Plants and more. The camps are held on Wednesdays. There is a fee which varies by Mini Camp to cover the costs. Go to Smokeytimbers.org to register and pay. Details on each offering can also be viewed as well as additional offerings not mentioned above.

In addition to the normal camping activities, fixup and repairs for the camp continue to be ongoing.

This past winter the camp had shoreline damage (like many of our lake neighbors) as well as piles of washed-up reeds. The issues were resolved thanks to the help of volunteers. The playground equipment had to be removed due to age, safety issues and costly major repairs that would be needed. As a result, the camp is looking for a good quality replacement that will last well into the future.

Two maintenance projects that address existing needs and issues are being considered. One project would upgrade the camps outside grilling area. This would enhance the grilling experience as well as provide additional safety. The second project would replace the screen porch's deck which needs major repairs. Both projects will be completed this year if logistical and financial requirements can be satisfied.

As with these projects and all projects, Smokey Timbers Camp relies on the generosity of our Friends of the Camp for financial and volunteer support.

Once again, Smokey Timbers Camp would like to sincerely thank the Lake Miltona Association, the many lake residents, and friends of the camp who have both volunteered and provided financial support to the camp. This support not only helps offset the operating costs but provides support for capital projects and unplanned maintenance.

Assistance of any sort for any of the above is gratefully appreciated. Contributions are documented and qualify as tax deductible per IRS code, Section 170. Individuals who are interested in how they can help are encouraged to contact the camp at 15567 Smokey Timbers RD NW, Miltona, MN 56354 or smokeytimbers@gmail.com. Additional info is available at smokeytimbers.org.

Dittberners Creek Culvert Update

An article in our 2024 Fall Lake Miltona Association Newsletter introduced a project to replace the current Dittberner Creek's culvert under Dittberners Creek Road. As reported in that article the objective of this project is: (1) to reduce the erosion of the downstream bank that deposits unwanted silt downstream and (2) to improve fish passage through the culvert thus providing additional spawning habitat for walleye and other Lake Miltona fish by reducing the water velocity exiting the current culvert.

A Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grant proposal for upgrading the Dittberners Creek culvert was completed last fall by Jerry Haggenmiller of the Douglas County Soil and Water Conservation (SWCD). The project will involve installing a 12-foot by 7-foot reinforced concrete box culvert to address the issues outlined above. The total grant amount requested is \$307,412. This grant will require a 10% match. As mentioned in our Fall Newsletter, the Lake Miltona Association (LMA) reviewed this application for upgrading the Dittberners Creek culvert and we sent a letter of support for it to the DNR. We anticipate that our LMA will provide some of the matching funds required as the project moves forward. There will be a fundraising drive to fully meet the requirements of the grant.

Early this year we received the good news that this grant has been secured. The final plan for obtaining the bids for this project is currently being prepared. The work on this project is projected to begin in late summer or early fall. Jerry Haggenmiller has agreed to come to our LMA annual meeting on June 7th to provide an overview of this project.

Draining Nelson Lake

The Otter Tail County Commissioners have had a long and, as it turns out, continuing interest in addressing the issue of high water in Nelson Lake to prevent flooding of farmland and flooding Otter Tail County Road 6. As reported in our Fall 2023 "Lake Miltona News" this is ongoing concern for both Lake Miltona and the rest of the Long Prairie River watershed because, unfortunately, Nelson Lake is impaired. A potential drainage proposal to address this issue would send impaired water through Fish Lake then Twin Lakes then via Dittberners Creek into Lake Miltona. An introduction to this project can be found in our Fall 2023 "Lake Miltona News" and on our web page. A history of concerns raised about this potential project can be found at the following link: <https://ottertailcounty.gov/project/nelson-lake-outlet/>

At the time of our Fall 2023 "Lake Miltona News," no action on this project was reported in the October minutes from the Otter Tail County Commissioners, so it seemed that this project was no longer being

Lake Steward Program

The Douglas County Lakes Association has launched a Lake Steward program. The Lake Steward program was established by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates. The Lake Steward program empowers homeowners to evaluate their practices and take incremental steps to protect our waterways for generations to come. Through this neighbor-to-neighbor interactive initiative, we're fostering commitment and pride in the natural beauty of shorelines that absorb runoff, stabilize soil, and provide essential habitat for Minnesota's treasured wildlife.

We are looking for Lake Steward volunteers on Lake Miltona! We need evaluators and participants. You can explore the specifics of the program here: <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-steward/> Or, contact Jay Sieling DCLA President ghotierman1@gmail.com

Each shoreline owner can take steps to reduce nutrient runoff and implement conservation actions. It can be done through partial restorations, rain gardens, "lakescaping" and in ways that have an eye-catching appeal. Lakeshores weren't meant to have suburban lawns mowed to the water's edge. A lake is not a swimming pool. Minnesota has already lost approximately half of its natural shorelines. The rate of loss continues at 1-2% per decade. That is too much, and contributes to degraded lake quality. Help maintain Lake Miltona as a lake designated as "Exceptional Use" and a lake of biological significance.

Become a Lake Steward!

Draining Nelson Lake (Cont.)

pursued. However, the Otter Tail County Commissioners March 11, 2025 minutes report that: "Motion by Mortenson, second by Bucholz and unanimously carried to approve a contract amendment with Houston Engineering in an amount up to \$79,738.00 to proceed with an environmental assessment worksheet for CSAH 6 reconstruction at Nelson Lake." An article by Tom Hintgen, Otter Tail County Correspondent in The Parkers Prairie Independent, March 20th issue front page provided additional information on this action. It said: "Rerouting the offtake ditch in a different direction, raising the grade of the road more than a couple of feet and providing wide shoulders to accommodate farm equipment is an investment estimated to cost \$7.8 million. That's due, in large part, to poor soils under the existing roadbed." Further details are not available at the present time; however, some sort of project is clearly ongoing and we believe it will be necessary to continue to monitor the possibility of this unwanted Impaired water being directed to Lake Miltona.

LAKE MILTONA

ASSOCIATION

790 East Sandy Beach Drive NE

Miltona, MN 56354

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Lake Miltona News

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2025 Calendar of Events

June 7	Annual Meeting	9:00 am
July 4	Boat Parade	Noon
July 12	Directors Meeting	9:00 am
August 9	Annual Fundraiser	5-10:00 pm
October 11	Directors Meeting	9:00 am

FIKA

at Smokey Timbers

The Swedish tradition of taking a break, usually with a coffee or tea and a small treat, to relax and connect with others.

Wednesday mornings at 10am, on the camp deck starting June 4!

Smokey Timbers invites you to
mini-camps



Wednesday, June 11, 9am-11am
Lake Surfing Kids Kamp



Wednesday, June 11, 6pm
Backyard Chickens 101



Wednesday, June 18, 1pm
Building a Terrarium



Wednesday, June 18, 6-7:30pm
Ice Cream Science



Wednesday, June 18, 6pm
Sourdough for Beginners



Wednesday, June 25, 1pm
ZEBCO School of Fish



Wednesday, June 25, 6pm
Cut Down a Tree Safely



Wednesday, July 9, 6pm
Your Home Apothacary



Wednesday, July 16, 1pm
Bark Carving (Woodcarving)



Wednesday, July 16, 6pm
Foraging for Medicinal Plants



Wednesday, July 23, 9am
Paddle Tour!



Wednesday, July 23, 6pm
Beekeeping for Beginners



Wednesday, August 6, 6pm
Pies! Pies! Pies!



Wednesday, August 13, 6pm
Focaacia for Beginners



See our website
for information on each
camp, additional camps,
and registration!

Our Mission...

The mission of Smokey Timbers Foundation is to:

- Provide affordable camping and recreational opportunities for youth organizations and family groups - Scouts, 4H, Churches, Schools, YMCA, Community Education, etc.
- Offer educational opportunities that focus on environmental protection, preservation, and remediation.
- Provide a retreat site for spiritual, personal and community development activities.
- Preserve and enhance the physical assets of Smokey Timbers Camp.

Around Camp....

Are you interested in Lake Miltona, the outdoors, youth, families, and sharing your skills? We can always use more boardmembers and helpers around camp. Give us a call at 320-766-5290, or email us at smokeytimbers@gmail.com. We'd love your help!