



June 2020

Lake Association Members,

Some of you may remember the Public Radio Show "A Prairie Home Companion." This was a weekly radio variety show hosted by Garrison Keillor and it retired on Public Radio each Saturday from 1974-2016. One of my personal favorite parts of the show that I enjoyed was his weekly monologue and "News from Lake Wobegon." This was a fictitious hometown the host told stories about. Garrison Keillor would start his monologue by saying, "It has been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon, my home town..." That is sort of the way I have felt as I sit down to write the June Newsletter. It has been a quiet month for the Island Chain of lakes Association. However, there has been a notable increase of boat traffic on the lakes. Due to ongoing Covid-19 concerns, Lake Association activities continue to be impacted and or delayed. As many of you who get the email newsletter and updates you already know that the board had made the decision to cancel the June meeting and we are hoping that since the July meeting is outdoors at Sunny's that we can keep that meeting date for July 11th.

As I continue to discuss priority focus areas that I shared in the first newsletter- I am pleased to share an entry by the recently retired Eau Claire Chief of Police, and current lake association member and property owner on our chain of lakes, Gerald Staniszewski. I also wanted to share a couple other things we were working on over the winter and thank those involved.

501c3- As many of you know over the last several years we, as an organization, became recognized as a 501c3 as a Non-Profit Organization. This past winter, I had the joy of working with Chain Lake property owner, association member, and retired attorney Ralph Heuschele to finalize moving the 40 acres of land the Association owns at the mouth of the Ohmart Wetland area into the 501c3. We learned at the end of the winter that by doing this, starting in 2021, the organization will no longer have to pay property taxes on this land. It was a document intensive process, but under the guidance of Ralph we were approved. Also, completed during this time was a quick claim deed to update the title on the Associations land from the old Associations name to the new incorporated name of Island Chain of Lakes, Inc. On behalf of the Association, I would like to thank Ralph for his donated work on this project.

WEBSITE: Early this Spring, Stephanie Rau, Island Chain of Lakes Property Owner, Association member, and our current website guru provided a virtual learning course on our website to myself, Al Christianson, and Mary Nordin to teach us how to add, change and update the website. This is an

on-going process, but you will be seeing updates coming to the website soon. Check us out at Islandchainoflakes.org. Thanks Stephanie for providing your time and expertise during this virtual training with the group.

Your President,
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Theft and Burglary Prevention

Gerald "Skee" Staniszewski
Retired Chief of Police - Eau Claire Police Department
Licensed Realtor with RE/MAX Affiliates for the Island Chain of Lakes



When you are the victim of a theft or burglary it can leave you feeling angry and powerless to criminals. You can replace the stolen atv, trailer, or fishing equipment, but it's hard to replace that sense of security and peace of mind.

As the former Chief of Police for the City of Eau Claire, I can attest that property crimes can have a significant impact on the quality of life in a community. Our department focused prevention efforts on this crime and had success in reducing crime statistics by partnering with the community and neighborhoods. We learned that there are steps you can take to reduce the chances that you will be the victim of a theft. Here are some best practices:

1. Eliminate easy opportunities for criminals.
2. Make sure your home or cottage has the "lived in" look.
3. Take steps to "target harden" your home.
4. Use technology when available.
5. Create connected neighborhoods.

Generally speaking, many instances of theft are crimes of opportunity. It is done without planning or premeditation. Prevention starts with making sure your personal property is locked up and out of sight. We live in a safe area, but that doesn't mean you should leave your keys in your car and your home unlocked. Remember to secure the trailer, lock your car doors, put the atv and bikes in the garage and don't leave your fishing gear on the dock. Establish an everyday habit of putting things away.

Thefts and burglaries increase during the off season around the lake. Criminals take advantage of seasonal occupancy to reduce their chances of being caught. One way to deter these opportunists is to make sure your home or cottage has the “lived in” look. Ensure that your lawn is mowed and your driveway is plowed on a regular basis. Have automated or motion lights on your home and gardens. Ensure no mail builds up in your mailbox by putting a hold on your mail. Turn a TV on when you’re gone for both flickering light and sound. Leaving a car parked in the driveway is also very effective.

Target hardening refers to strengthening the security of a home. Crime prevention through environmental design is effective in creating a strong visible defense to deter thieves. Techniques include installing doors and windows that resist being forced open and adding uncomfortable landscaping and fencing to deter human presence. Thieves will usually access the property from a window or door opposite the road so focus on increasing lighting and reducing potential hiding places next to the home in those areas.

Using the newest technology gives you another tool to aid in prevention and the apprehension of criminals. Home alarm systems, surveillance cameras and interactive video door cameras allow remote monitoring of your home and investments. These systems can also help in documenting crimes that do occur to assist police in identifying suspects. New technology, along with internet connection, can be costly but can bring a significant peace of mind.

Probably the most effective means of deterring crime is having a connected neighborhood. Get to know your neighbors on a first name basis. Establishing a personal connection will likely result in looking out for each other and an ability to know when things just aren’t right. Throw a wave to those who are walking by or driving by your home slowly. If they are just out for exercising or sightseeing, you may have just made a new friend. If they have bad intentions, they are no longer anonymous and likely not to return to the area. An analysis of crime statistics shows that neighborhoods with active neighborhood associations have lower crime rates. A community that looks after each other and has a good communication network deters crime and is quick to react when something does happen.

Even with preventative measures in place, thefts will occur, but we can reduce the number of incidents through proactive behavior and a good communication network. However, if you find your house broken into, don’t go inside to investigate. Call the police from your cell phone or the neighbor’s home. Nothing is worth risking your or your family’s safety, and everything can be replaced. You also risk destroying any evidence that police can collect to help solve the crime and recover your property. A good practice is to put your name or identifying marks on your property so it can be returned if located later.

I am thankful for our active lake association and the proactive steps the leadership has taken to keep everyone informed. Take the next step and help reduce the chances a theft or burglary will occur in your neighborhood on the lake. Please feel free to contact me with any questions about safety and security. I can be reached at gerald.staniszewski@gmail.com.

ASSOCIATION STORE:

ASSOCIATION STORE/ MERCHANDISE FOR SALE: Due to COVID-19, we've decided to keep the **online store open until Monday, June 15th @ 11:59 p.m.**

Items will be ready for pick-up at the Saturday, July 11, 11:00 Sunny's Bar Brat Feed/ Meeting.

<https://chippewavalleysportinggoods.itemorder.com/>

SALES CODE: Island20

Please direct any questions to Mary at 715.829.2542 or mbbaldesh@gmail.com

2020 Meeting Schedule

- June Meeting- Backwoods Bar CANCELLED DUE TO COVID
- Saturday, July 11, 11:00 Sunny's Bar Brat Feed/ Meeting.

(Note the 11:00 start time due to the brat feed to follow)

- August 8, 2020, 10 AM Hawk's Bar/ Meeting
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While supplies last, member calendars can be picked up from

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