

Gilbert Lake Association Newsletter

Vol. 4, Issue 1, Spring, 2003

Next Meeting

The next Gilbert Lake Association meeting is Thursday, May 8th at 7 p.m. at the Paul Bunyan Nature Learning Center on Wise Road. Please attend!

Agenda for the meeting:

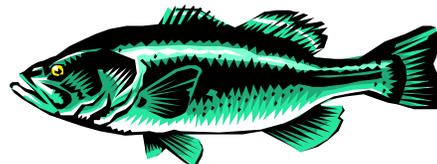
- Report regarding the Gilbert Lake Association's work on Brainerd's new shoreland ordinance.
- Discussion about annexation and sewer issues
- Report on water quality testing of Gilbert Lake over the past four years
- Lakescaping and shoreland buffers discussion and selling of Lakescaping books
- Election of officers for upcoming year
- Future association projects or events - another summer party?
- Miscellaneous business

Action Taken at 2002 Meeting

Last year we met on May 6, 2002 and the Association discussed these subjects and took the following action:

- Discussed current projects of the Association

- Reported on walleye stocking in Gilbert Lake
- Reported on water quality testing of Gilbert Lake over the past three years
- Discussed signage at public access
- Reported on Initiative Foundation opportunities and Minnesota legislative update
- Discussed group pricing on septic pumping but took no action
- Reviewed a Lakescaping CD on computer
- Elected Officers for upcoming year
- Took a vote against commercial development on Wise Road
- Planned a summer party



Keeping Phosphorus Out of Gilbert Lake

As many of you know, phosphorus is the key nutrient that will cause algae and weed growth in most lakes, including Gilbert Lake. One pound of phosphorus can grow 500 pounds of algae or weeds. Not only does this turn our lakes green, but algae blooms can consume much of the lake's oxygen and lead to fish kills.

In 1976, Minnesota law limited laundry and household cleaning products to 0.5% phosphorus. A bill now before the legislature would do the same to automatic dishwasher detergents by setting the maximum phosphorus limit at 0.5 percent by weight instead of the current 11 percent national standard. One box of Cascade dishwashing detergent can grow 100 pounds of algae! Until this law passes (if it ever does – there is heavy lobbying against it), try to only purchase low- or no-phosphorus dishwasher detergent. Most grocery stores carry it, but if yours doesn't, ask them to do so.

Finally, last year the state legislature allowed local governments to ban phosphorus in lawn fertilizers. Crow Wing county is now moving toward adopting such a ban and Brainerd is discussing it. Contact the county board members and city council members to encourage them to vote for the ban, as it is very important to protect Gilbert Lake.



Commercial Development in Gilbert Lake Watershed Continues to be Pushed

Certain members of the Brainerd City Council continue to push for commercial zoning of land along Wise Road. As many of you know, the wetlands around Wise Road drain directly into Gilbert Lake. If you think commercial businesses in the Gilbert Lake watershed are a bad idea, contact members of the Brainerd

city council or attend a council meeting to express your opinions.

"Lakescaping"

Having a "buffer zone" at the edge of your shoreline is the solution to reduce erosion, algae blooms and poor water quality, according to the authors of the DNR book *Lakescaping for Wildlife and Water Quality*. A buffer zone is a strip of natural vegetation along at least 75% of a property's frontage. The goal of creating the buffer is to restore the shoreline with the native vegetation that was originally there, such as wildflowers, shrubs, grasses, and aquatic plants. The benefits of a buffer strip are many, as it:

- Acts as a filter to help prevent fertilizers and pesticides from reaching the lake
- If planted with native plants, doesn't need any fertilizer
- Helps reduce shoreline erosion by slowing down and absorbing the water flowing toward the lake
- Keeps geese away from your yard, because they don't like tall grasses and wildflowers
- Reduces homeowner maintenance because they don't need to be mowed

Without a buffer strip, nutrients such as phosphorus can reach the lake and encourage weed growth and algae blooms.

Best of all, creating a buffer strip means less mowing and lawn work for you!

Copies of the Lakescaping book will be available at the annual meeting at a reduced price (\$12 –retail \$20)

A MESSAGE FROM THE GLA PRESIDENT

I have had the privilege of being the president of the Gilbert Lake Association for the past five or so years. Unfortunately, most of my time as president has been spent putting out fires—whether it involved Riverside Drive issues, development issues or otherwise. For example, recently I have probably spent nearly 100 hours working on Brainerd's shoreland ordinances so that we get an ordinance that provides at least some protection to the lake.

These activities have left me little time to do the things a lake association president should be doing, such as organizing groups, finding new projects, preparing newsletters and acting as a “cheerleader” for our lake community. At this year's meeting, I will ask for nominations for another Association president—or at least a vice-president—to take over some of these duties that I have neglected. I am happy to keep working on some of the legal and development issues, but only if someone else will take the laboring oar for the organizational aspects of our association.

Before the meeting, please consider who may be effective in this role. Let me know if you have some ideas or are interested yourself.

--Paul Jacobsen

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Several projects need a sponsor! Please contact Paul Jacobsen (829-1726) if you are willing to do any of the following:

- **NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION.** We can use someone who is willing to put together this newsletter. Right now, it won't be anything more than an annual event. It would be great if someone could help produce it more often.
- **STUDY CREATING A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION FOR THE GILBERT LAKE ASSOCIATION.** If the Gilbert Lake Association became a 501(c)(3) corporation your donations to it would be tax-deductible. With more money, our association could accomplish so many more things to protect our lake.



Gilbert Lake Association
c/o Paul and Sally Jacobsen
16118 Birchwood Lane
Brainerd, MN 56401

JOIN THE GILBERT LAKE ASSOCIATION!

Please come to the annual meeting or return the following to
16118 Birchwood Lane, Brainerd, MN 56401

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address _____

Sign me up as a member -- \$20 _____

Make check payable to the *Gilbert Lake Association*