

Rain almost holds off for ICLSP Annual Membership Meeting
By Vicki Browne
Iron County Lakes & Streams Partnership

Spirits were not dampened at the Iron County Lakes & Stream Partnership annual membership meeting on Sunday, June 25th even though the pontoon tours of Buck Lake were washed off the agenda. Intermittent afternoon downpours made taking to the water a bit risky.

ICLSP has a meeting for all members each year; however, this was the first in-person gathering since 2019 when the meeting was at Ice Lake and the weather was beautiful. Pontoon tours that ended only because the sun went down gave members and their families a better understanding of Ice Lake's topography and aquatic life.

"No two lakes in Iron County are alike." according to Mike Golas, president of ICLSP. "The annual membership meeting gives everyone a chance to meet interesting people and learn about other lakes."

Roy Carlson, past owner of Lake and Pond Solutions Co., offered to host this year's meeting at Buck Lake Park. As an aquatic plant specialist and Buck Lake resident, his data and perspectives on Buck Lake were highlights of the meeting.

Going out onto the lake was curtailed, but Carlson quickly pivoted to a computer presentation that allowed everyone to learn while staying dry.

Buck Lake is in Mastodon Township near the village of Alpha. It is over 150 acres in size with a maximum depth of 38 feet. Water flows in from Mastodon Creek and out through Armstrong Creek to Armstrong Lake and eventually the Brule River.

Carlson completed an extensive study of the lake to create a precise topographical map and an impressive database listing all aquatic plant species and their abundance. "Buck Lake has a vibrant plant community with 39 different species," said Carlson. "Our biggest concern is Eurasian water milfoil, but it seems to stay put and only expand a little bit."

Other fascinating facts from Carlson's presentation:

- Chara, a native species found in Buck Lake and also known as muskgrass, is a rooted form of algae that stabilizes bottom sediments and enhances water clarity.
- Rusty Crayfish, an invasive species not found in Buck Lake, can decimate the aquatic plant community because they eat voraciously.
- If native aquatic plants get a head start in the lake, they uptake nutrients so filamentous algae will not become a nuisance.

Although the predicted rain deterred many of the 239 members of ICLSP, nine lakes were represented: Buck, Chicaugon, Fortune, Hagerman, Iron, Stager, Stanley, Sunset and Swan. Jen Ricker-Feak of the Iron-Baraga Conservation District was also in attendance.

Tom Madden, ICLSP treasurer, reported that annual dues for individual members will continue to be \$10. Lake associations, organizations and businesses can join for free. "At \$10 per year and no cost for organizations, many members choose to make additional donations," said Madden.

Current directors Diane Kut and Sally Davis were up for reelection. Their efforts on behalf of ICLSP are very much appreciated, and both were unanimously voted in for another two-year term.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed chicken provided by ICLSP and a variety of side dishes and desserts provided by attendees. Although the rain kept us under the lovely Frank and Sophie Rae Pavillion, everyone had a great time. "Despite the weather, we enjoyed good food, good friendship, and lively discussion," one member noted and all present agreed.

ICLSP welcomes individuals, businesses, lake associations and organizations to become members. ICLSP focuses on four areas:

- awareness of invasive species and water quality;
- education for those who want to learn more about local lake and stream issues and solutions;
- technology that moves us from guess-work to science-based, effective approaches;
- cooperation that helps all stakeholders preserve and protect lakes and streams.

Individuals wanting to share their insights and talents are invited to contact ICLSP about becoming a director. No matter what your skill, hobby, occupation or passion, if you are interested in lakes and streams, you can help.

For more information check the ICLSP website at www.iclakesandstreamspartnership.com/
Or the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100066970141551
Contact ICLSP by email at iclakesandstreamspartnership@gmail.com