



Big Star Lake Party Line

Spring/Summer
2025

Presidents Corner:

The Mission of the Big Star Lake Association (BSLA) is to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural beauty and environmental health of Big Star Lake and its surrounding areas. The association endeavors to foster a sense of community among its members and to promote responsible use and enjoyment of the lake's resources.

We're all excited and looking forward to another fun and safe summer on Big Star Lake! A complete schedule of activities is included in this Spring/Summer Newsletter edition.

Please join us at our Annual General Membership Meeting on May 24th – 9:30am at the Chapel where we will discuss in further detail everything your board members have been working on as well as more details on the fun events we have planned. It is also a great opportunity to get involved by sharing your thoughts, ideas, questions or concerns you may have.

The BSLA is actively seeking individuals who are interested in becoming a member of the board. Serving as a Big Star Lake Association board member is a rewarding and impactful role. Board members serve on the board to ensure the preservation, protection and enhancement of the lake and its surrounding area. Ideally every area of the lake would be represented by a board member. If you love Big Star Lake and interested in fulfilling our mission, please contact any board member. We welcome the opportunity to share more about this important role.

Looking forward to a great summer on the water! We also look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting!

Co-Presidents

Lew Gorbach/Tom Seeley

Enclosed with this issue is your 2025 membership return envelope should you prefer mailing a check for your dues. You will also receive email updates to easily renew your membership online. You can also access your membership online via our website www.bigstarlake.com to renew. There is also a 2025 decal to place over last year's. If your original sign has come up missing, you can pick up a replacement for \$5 at the annual meeting. If you are a new member and haven't received your sign yet, you too can pick up your free sign at the meeting as well.



Pictured: L to R: Tom Seeley, Fire Chief Doug Wolgamott, Lew Gorbach. Donation presentation from BSLA.



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For More information and Event Updates check out our Website
www.bigstarlake.com

BIG STAR LAKE ASSOCIATION

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2025 BSLA Schedule of Events

For all event details, check out our website at www.bigstarlake.com.

| | | | |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
| Annual Meeting: | 5-24-25 | 9:30am | Chapel |
| Spring Road Clean Up | 5-17-25 | to | 5-24-25 |
| Fishing Contest: | 5-24-25 | Through | 9-01-25 |
| Fire Works: | 7-5-25 | Rain Date | 7-12-25 |
| Poker Run: | 8-02-25 | Rain Date | 8-09-25 |
| Labor Day Road Run: | 8-30-25 | | |
| Fall Road Clean Up: | 9-06-25 | to | 9-13-25 |

The Board has decided to pause the Summer concert for this year due to budget restraints and the addition of a new and improved BSLA website. Check it out!

For the Spring and Fall Road Clean Up, pick up your orange trash bags and reflective safety vest at Mr. Bibs. A big thank you to Mr. Bibs for helping us out with this important event!

2025 SPRING BIG STAR LAKE ROAD CLEANUP

After the long cold gray days of winter, Spring is a season to celebrate by spending time outside. Volunteering an hour of your time participating in the annual Spring Big Star Lake Road cleanup allows you to see and hear the sights and sounds of Spring and make a difference by helping maintain the beauty of the road that wraps around the lake.

The dates of the Spring Big Star Lake Road cleanup run from **Saturday, May 17 through Saturday, May 24**. The road around the lake is divided into Areas A through H and it takes a just a few volunteers to clean up each area.

Safety vests and large orange trash bags are provided and will be available for volunteers to pick up at Mr. Bibs on Saturday, **May 17 through Saturday, May 24**.

Trash bags should be placed at the area marker sign for the **Lake County Road Commission** to pick up.

Members who are interested in volunteering for the Spring road clean up, should watch for an email message from the membership portal site in early May directing them to fill in and submit the sign up form. Invite your family to join you as many hands make light work. Thank you for your willingness to volunteer for this annual activity.

Please visit the website under Volunteer button on the home page or via the event page.

FISHING CONTEST

Judy Alphenaar

The start of the 2025 annual Big Star Lake fishing contest for association members is just around the corner. The contest runs from opening day of Bass fishing on Saturday, May 24 and closes on Labor Day, Monday, September 1, 2025. Members of all ages and experience levels are welcome to participate. Fill out the entry form located on our webpage at www.bigstarlake.com.

Participants are expected to comply with all Michigan DNR rules and regulations regarding fishing licenses, minimum/maximum length, maximum daily catch count, and open season for each species. We encourage catch and release practices especially for frogs and turtles.

Winners of the 2024 Big Star Lake fishing contest should pick up their trophies on Saturday, May 24 at the Big Star Lake Chapel during our annual association meeting.

GOOD-TO-KNOW-FISHING INFORMATION

June 7 – 8 2025 is a free fishing weekend in Michigan. All fishing license fees will be waived for two days. Residents and out-of-state visitors may enjoy fishing on both inland and Great Lakes waters for all species of fish. All fishing regulations still apply.

When fishing (especially with children) wear sunglasses not only to cut down on squinting and glare but also as protection from accidentally being hooked in the area of the eye.

Visit the BSLA website at www.bigstarlake.com to see the 2024 winners!



Big Star Lake Fire Works 2025



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Big Star Lake Fireworks will begin at approximately 10:15 on July 5, 2025. Inclement weather date is July 12, 2025. Pyrotechnico Fireworks, Inc. will be putting on our fireworks show. Memorial shells are available for a minimum donation of \$250, which is a tax deductible donation made out to BSLA. Memorial shells will be acknowledged on our website . All donations & Sponsorships are Greatly appreciated for this Exciting Community Event. If you are interested in becoming a Sponsor and or a donor please contact me at 616-638-0488 or e-mail me at gorbachlew@yahoo.com. The BSLA annual fireworks is just one of the many fine events your association provides. Pictures and comments are always welcome.

Sincerely yours,
Lew Gorbach
gorbachlew@yahoo.com



POKER RUN

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 2025

Rain Date August 9

STARTS at 1 p.m.

Cost \$10 per hand

How it works:

- Boats will proceed around the lake, starting at 1 p.m., using your home as starting point, until you have made 5 stops.
- The stops will have an orange construction cone at the end of the dock identifying it as a stop.
- Participants will draw a card at each stop and the host will mark the Tally Sheet.
- No duplicate cards can be used, so participants must draw an additional card if identical card is drawn.
- Meet on the beach at Tall Oaks Camp no later than 4:30 to determine/announce winners and 50/50 raffle drawing.

How to register:

Registration will take place at the Association Meeting on Saturday, May 24, and in front of Mr. Bibs the mornings of July 19 & 20 and July 26 & 27 (8-10:30 a.m.). We will also be selling 50/50 raffle tickets those mornings.

Please contact Mike VanDyken at firefighter1828@yahoo.com if you are unable to sign up at these times and would like to participate, or if you have any questions.



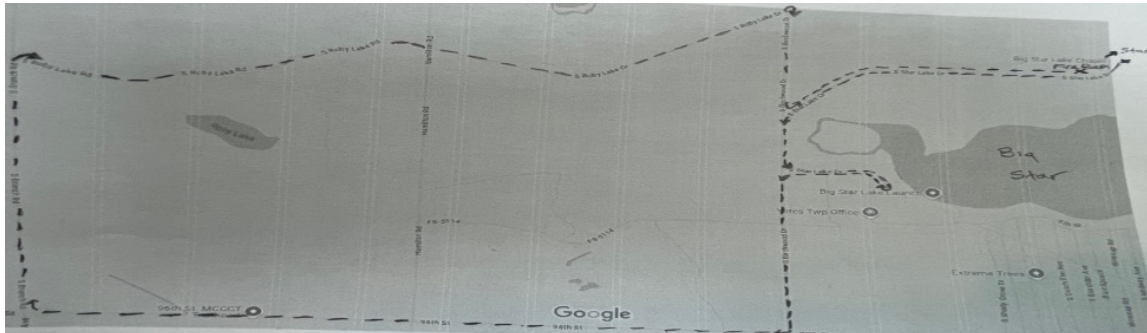
Here's where we need your help! We are still looking for people to host stops at their dock. Please go to "Donate Now" button on the homepage of the website.

Labor Day Road Race

Gary Bissonette

Welcome summer of 2025. The annual BSLA road run is scheduled for August 30. The 15K race will kick off at 8:30 am with 5K and Kids Race to follow. Day of race registration is still available starting at 7:15 but in order to be ensured a race shirt and reduced registration fee sign up via your member portal on the website, or mail in your registration and payment prior to the deadline. The instructions are on the registration form and can be downloaded from the BSLA Website or picked up at Mr. Bibs. We are providing members of BSLA and family/friends a reduced registration fee of \$20. Non members' fee and registration after the deadline will be \$25.

Due to safety concerns we will be closing the Star Lake road down from 8:30 to 11:00 am between the fire barn and boat launch for the 5K race. Access to Lake Township offices and boat launch from the opposite direction will be maintained. The 15K course has been rerouted off the blacktop and will not go around the lake. Please refer to the map for details. This was the best compromise we could draw up to improve safety but not interfere with everyone else's activities around the lake. Further instructions will be given out on race day. We hope these changes will help improve the safety of our event and that participants will still have an enjoyable experience. See you on Labor Day weekend.



Raccoon vs. Turtles – No Match

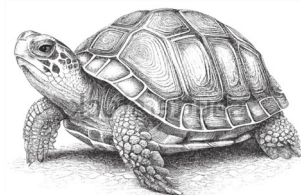
Mark Hoekstra

Raccoons, while a species native to Michigan, have become overabundant due to the alteration of available resources by humans. We have many of them around Big Star Lake and they are wreaking havoc on our turtle population. The unnaturally high densities of raccoons can result in 100% turtle nest mortality at some sites. Raccoons often destroy most, if not all, turtle nests in areas of high raccoon density, which leads to low reproduction rates. Because many turtle species are long-lived with a slow rate to maturity and low reproductive capacity, mortality exceeding the normal rate of loss could lead to population declines and possible long-term population or species extermination. Our friends on Hidden Bayou have witnessed this nest and population decline with nests being dug up and eggs eaten within 24 hours of eggs being laid.

If you catch a turtle, the BSLA encourages you to release them unharmed where caught.

References:

(Herpetological Resource and Management 2011a)
(Oldfield 1994, Geller 2012)



Government Report

Larry Treece

Greetings to Members of the BSLA. Wishing you all a great 2025 season as I know most of you are thinking about it all ready...plus all the things to do when you get back up and the things you forgot to do or intended to do before winter hit.

Ok ..here we go with what I do know...Number 1...the cell tower is working better!!...but not at full capacity until "later in the spring".

Number 2..we have a new Township Supervisor..." a new Sheriff in town "so to speak...Bob " Wyatt Earp " Mateja...lol....he has brought in some new staff in the Building Zoning area...Amy " Anne Oakley" Rademaker and Zoning Assistant Mike " Sundance Kid" Van Dyken.

I have known Bob Mateja over 25 years and served with him on the BSLA Board and other committees. His interest in Lake Township has grown over the past 25 years and I know him to be a man of his word .He is a " no nonsense " kind of guy but has a big heart and a good sense of humor. I expect him to be accountable when it comes to doing his job...AND...he will expect you and I to be accountable for the rules in the township as written when it comes to Building ,Zoning, Camping, Roads in township, Road End Docks, healthy water, and treatments of our Lake. He is an elected official and will pick who he wants in certain positions. There will be a learning curve for all of us but I encourage you to go meet him....talk to him and bring issues of concern for in my opinion he is ready to move ahead in 2025to bring Lake Township forward and improving our Township.

His support for the Fire Department the past 10 years has been very helpful and he has a son who is a Fireman as well on the East side of State. Bobs wife Dianne is a great support to him and knows how to keep him on the right trac....in fact I'm nominating her for Sainthood in 2026!!!

Bob has a good staff Bob R, Kris Z and Cathy V... and a good board to work with so we look forward to productive meetings. These are my observations and perceptions from working with all of the above mentioned.

Marine Officer Sgt Bob Meyers is getting ready for the 2025 Season of Marine and ORV. The Boats will come out around May 1-3 and Bob has hired another Marine /ORV officer Dan Minzey. Bob will also be looking at 2 other applicants. Why all the interest in working Lake County? ...couple reasons ..Bob now host a state certified Training course and has been recognized as a leading trainer in Michigan. Number 2 is the relationship and sponsorships coming from Peacock Limited who is really working hard to reach out to our community. Thank you for your support over the years Peacock and Welcome new leadership.

Bob expects good coverage at Big Star Lake and looks forward to speaking with you and introducing new staff. Our relationship with Marine Patrol has been growing over the years and we hope to continue with SAFETY FIRST on Big Star. Check your equipment before going out ...know the direction rules around the Lake and distances between docks and watercraft. Even if Marine Patrol is not on the Lake ..plenty of cell phone video may be helpful to identify violators.

As far as Road projects I'm not aware of any but if you have concerns you may call Lake County Road Commission with concerns and ask for LeRoy, he a is doing his best with his budget and he likes us!!

Treatment and assessment of Lake will start soon and President Lew G will cover the workings to get a new special assessment that has expired to fund Treatment. We have hired a great attorney, Cliff Bloom, to help us move forward and Bob Mateja is aware we are working on this.

In closing thanks for a fun 30 years of BSLA stuff as this will be my final official Newsletter. I intend helping introduce Tom Seeley to the folks in my " little black book of numbers" and contacts around the township and county. I believe in the Golden Rule and have enjoyed meeting with some very good people in Lake Township.

My intention is to remain on Fire Rescue 3 more years and also form a group of retired Board Members and friends of can serve as Volunteers, Advisors and Advocates for BSLA. This BSLA is a good organization for the Lake issues and is worthy of consideration if you could join the board and learn "THE REST OF THE STORY"... is truly fun and has been an honor....Special thanks as well to Mr. Bibs, Marquette Trails, Evergreen Covenant, and Natahka for making life more fun at Big Star.



Membership

Kris White

Membership. What motivates individuals to join voluntary associations- those like our Big Star Lake Association (BSLA)? In my seeking to understand why only ½ of property owners choose to be a part of our BSLA, I decided to ask AI.

So, I asked AI- "What motivates individuals to join voluntary organizations?" Here is what I learned.

What AI Reported

How the BSLA Measures Up

| | |
|--|---|
| Sense of Purpose | The BSLA's mission impacts all property owners. Focusing on lake quality as our top priority should be aligned with purpose of all from an environmental steward perspective but also to protect our assets. |
| Making a Difference | The entire BSLA annual plan is to positively impact the lake and the community. |
| Support to Organization Achieves Mission and Goals | Supporting the BSLA through membership, donation and volunteerism is the only way any of the work gets done. There is no funding or manpower beyond "us"- the members. |
| Community Building | Our activities and efforts work to foster a sense of community, build relationships, a sense of belonging, bringing people together around shared interests. |
| Access to Resources | The BSLA offers access to many resources through our website, newsletters, and annual meeting- all of which can benefit all property owners. |
| Advocacy and Representation | On behalf of all members, the BSLA has developed strong relationships with township, local and state agencies that directly connect and impact BSL- advocating for issues and actions that are important to all property owners. |
| Personal Growth | There are many opportunities to not only be a member, but to actively participate in the BSLA. Volunteering, lending your voice and ideas, or taking a more active role as a committee member or board member provides an opportunity for deeper impact and personal growth. We encourage all members to consider deeper involvement in the important work of the BSLA. |

All in all, I think the association stacks up well and should be a motivator for all to join! So we say THANK YOU- to all of our members! None of the efforts are possible without you.

May 1st is the renewal day for memberships. Please jump online or return your annual dues in the envelop included in this newsletter.

Finally, I have 2 asks of you. First- This year we are working hard to double down on our communication efforts. To those of you who have not yet joined our online member portal, please do so. Electronic communication is the easiest and fastest way for us to stay connected and in communication with each other. You can access your member portal directly, or via our new website at www.bigstarlake.com.

Second- Please help us spread the word to your family and friends. For a mere \$50, individuals can join as a property owner/Regular member, or as a lover of BSL/Associate Member. We will continue to work to reach those who are not yet members, or who have lapsed in their membership. But we really do need your help to spread the good work of the good work of the BSLA.

Again, many thanks for your continued support- and we so look forward to a wonderful summer on the lake!





Big Star Lake Association
P.O. Box 140146
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Address Correction Requested

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Big Star Lake Association Sponsorship Opportunity 2025

| GOLD LEVEL SPONSOR \$300 | SILVER LEVEL SPONSOR \$200 | BRONZE LEVEL SPONSOR \$100 |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive Spring & Fall BSLA newsletters • Receive BSLA associate membership sign • Company logo published in Fall newsletter • Company name & logo displayed on BSLA website home page sponsor ribbon • Company listed in Member Planet distribution portal for BSLA members • Company name displayed at BSLA summer concert • Company name displayed at annual BSLA Labor Day weekend road run • Company name displayed at BSLA poker run awards ceremony • Company name posted on BSLA sign on 76th Street for one week during the summer • Company name & logo printed on annual BSLA Labor Day road run t-shirt • Two complimentary road run t-shirts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company name & logo displayed on BSLA website home page sponsor ribbon • Company name displayed at BSLA summer concert • Company name displayed at annual BSLA Labor Day weekend road run • Company name & logo printed on annual BSLA Labor Day road run t-shirt • Two complimentary road run t-shirts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company name & logo displayed on BSLA website home page sponsor ribbon • Company name & logo printed on BSLA annual Labor Day road run t-shirt • One complimentary road run t-shirt |

Please make checks payable to **Big Star Lake Association** and mail to: Jeff Fraser, BSLA, 5689 Michigan Street, NE Ada, Michigan 49301. For questions, please contact Jeff at (616) 481-0477 or fraserj@millerjohnson.com.

