



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2014

VOLUME 10, NO. 1

## January 2014 President's Letter

Winter has come to the Portage Lake area in full force with bitter cold and over 100" of snow (according to the Manistee County Road Commission). If you are not here this winter getting a first-hand look, you can catch winter photos on Face Book at 1, -Onekama, Michigan.

As we go into the new year, it is worth spending some time reviewing what the Portage Lake Association did in 2013.

Our stated mission is: *The Portage Lake Association is a group of volunteers who are dedicated to making the Portage Lake Area a great place in which to live, play and stay.*

In 2013, the PLA accomplished and/or supported the following events and activities:

**Petunia Parade** – Planting and maintenance of the beautiful petunias along Main Street in Onekama.

**Scholarships**- totaling \$2000 to two 2013 graduates of Onekama Consolidated School

Co-sponsor of fishing tournaments- winter, spring, summer and during Onekama Days

**Summer banners** welcoming folks to the two lake town; and in winter **Christmas decorations** on light poles

Worked with the Onekama Lions on 4 pancake breakfasts to raise money for **Onekama Days**, Fife and Drum Band for the parade, fireworks, the car show, and promotion of Onekama Days. PLA held a Michigan craft beer tasting and a pig roast for scholarships during Onekama Days.

**Monday Night Concerts** in the Village Park – 8 concerts with a wide variety of music

**Fall Festival** in the Village Park with a craft show, kids games and rides, face painting and Balloon Man for the kids

**Christmas in Onekama** – craft show, Celebration of Lights, an auction of decorated Christmas trees. We also enabled the Boy Scouts to have a chili cook-off, local churches to hold bake sales during the event, and an Ugly Sweater Contest for the Student Council. This allowed other civic organizations to raise funds for their community efforts.

Portage Lake Association **Annual Fundraiser** and **Citizen of the Year** –our major fundraising event and our annual recognition of someone that has made a positive impact on Onekama.

**Quarterly Newsletter** – communication to the community on what the PLA is doing as well as what is happening in the Township and Village governments, Portage Lake Watershed Forever, Onekama Consolidated Schools, new businesses and general area interest stories.

**WWW.Onekama.info** –you may not know that this site was created by the Portage Lake Association for the community. It continues to add information about Onekama and the region- recently adding a fishing report section and a regional events section. The site is professionally managed and is self-supported through the business directory on the website. The PLA board and members provide management and design suggestions to the web master. We will be adding a shopping cart so contributions, membership dues and fundraiser tickets can be completed securely on-line.

Two active **Face Book pages** that help promote Onekama and northwest Michigan as well as local merchants. The popularity and impact of these pages continues to grow. A good relationship with the local Manistee newspaper allows us to publicize our events in it.

**Funds** for the Explore the Shores Project at the Village Park and partial funding of the Village Launch Repairs.

Quite a few PLA members volunteer time to the food pantry, the school, local churches and committees including, the Planning Commissions, Parks and Recreation Board and the Harbor Commission.

### Onekama Area Winter Events and Info

Jan. 17 through February 28-  
Furniture, Fiber and Sculpture Show in Honor  
of Evelyn Sorenson at Frankfort's Oliver Art Center,  
call 231-352-4151 for details

For Onekama Township news see the website  
[www.onekama.info/township/](http://www.onekama.info/township/)

and for village information -  
[www.onekama.info/village/](http://www.onekama.info/village/)

Be sure to visit our local businesses that are open  
this winter!! See how many you can find open-  
it may surprise you that so many are still  
around to help us survive the cold  
snowy winter of 2014!!

## January 2014 President's Letter Con't

\*\*\*All of this comes at a price. It takes volunteers to make these activities happen and over 2000 volunteer hours were donated in 2013. It also takes money, which means soliciting from businesses, our members and our neighbors. We have tried to make our events self-sustaining, meaning that funds that are raised for that particular activity cover its cost. But some are only covered by our June fundraiser. Here is how 2013 broke down financially.

Activity	Cost in 2013	Funds Raised Specifically for the activity	General Funds Needed from June Fund-raiser
Summer Banners and Christmas Lights for poles	\$6538	\$400 from selling used banners	\$6138
Admin Costs, Memberships, Newsletter and Onekama Promotion	\$6788	\$6910 – from membership dues and memorial donations	none
Christmas in Onekama –	\$1473	\$3623	none
Special Projects – Boat Launch, Explore the Shores Village Park upgrades	\$6500	\$0	\$6500
Fall Festival	\$1135	\$365	\$770
Petunia Parade	\$3405	\$3694	none
Monday Night Concerts	\$3801	\$3457	\$344
Onekama Days – Fireworks, Marching Band, Promotion	\$7295	\$4744	\$2551
Beer Tasting, Pig Roast	\$3158	\$5864	none
Scholarships	\$2000	\$2000	none
Fishing Tournaments	\$2300	\$500	\$1800
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$44049</b>	<b>\$24991</b>	<b>\$18103</b>

\$18,397 net profit from our June Fundraiser and \$2439 in other net income from donations are used from the general fund to offset expenses. \$2706 from the Beer Tasting and Pig Roast is assigned to 2014 scholarships.

The annual fundraiser is essential to make money for 6 of these annual activities to happen and to build up a surplus over a couple of years to support special projects. The energy required to hold a successful fundraiser is waning and some of these events may be facing elimination if we cannot get your support. If you see an event/activity that you would hate to see end, please donate your time and or money to make sure it can continue.

Additionally, the board of directors of the PLA voted in early November to expand the number of board members to 15 and to extend the terms of the offices of president and vice president to five years maximum. The membership approved these changes in early January. Both changes keep the PLA within the standard practices of other area organizations.

The by-laws of the PLA are in need of review and revision to keep them in line with current recommendations for civic organizations. Assistance to the board in this endeavor is needed.

Contact me if you wish to help in any of these areas (phone-889-0205 or [windsongmi@aol.com](mailto:windsongmi@aol.com))

Overall, 2013 was a good year for the Portage Lake Association. I would like to thank all the volunteers that have given their time and talents over this past year, and thank those who have grown these events to what they are today. Big thanks to all the people that contributed to the cause and helped make Onekama and the Portage Lake area a better place to live, play and stay. Hope to see you at our events!

*Al Taylor*

## CHRISTMAS IN ONEKAMA

Despite the wintery weather, "Christmas in Onekama" on Nov. 23 drew a large crowd. Shoppers were looking for that special Christmas gift or holiday baked goods, or just to participate in one of the many other activities available that day. Of course who could pass up the chili cook off? Trying to decide which chili was the best was not an easy task! More entries than ever were submitted this year for judging by the public.

The 2nd annual "Onekama Originals" silent tree auction did not disappoint the shoppers! The 24 trees were decorated beautifully with varied themes. The highest bidders were thrilled with the quality of the trees they won in the auction. New this year was the Ugly Holiday Sweater contest which the OCS High School students organized as a fundraiser for the 'giving tree'. A good time was had by all- the entrants and the audience!

**Don't miss next year's event! Mark Nov 22, 2014 on your calendar now!!**

## Invisible To The Naked Eye

Some of the Portage Lake Watershed Forever (PLWF) projects are pretty visible — purchase of the wetlands, controlling phragmites and other invasive plants, making presentations at the school — but others are not so obvious.

Our most recent ‘under the radar’ activity was to apply to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for a S.A.W.\* grant so that we could examine storm water runoff. Because Portage Lake is stream-fed, there is always the concern that upstream farming, recreational use, and domestic practices (e.g., lawn fertilization) may be contaminating tributary streams.

If our grant is selected we will be able to monitor phosphorus, flow rate and turbidity of storm water runoff from eleven of the streams that flow into Portage Lake.



(Turbidity is the measure of how much stuff is suspended in the water.) Those streams will be checked every month

for three years; if pollution is discovered, we will conduct at least four additional upstream checks to find out where the problem exists.

In addition, we will also monitor runoff at road and culvert locations and current public access sites. This monitoring will help identify potential sources of pollution and erosion.

Finally, if data indicates that problems exist, we will also identify and implement corrective “Best Management Practices”.

(Keep your fingers crossed; indications are that the competition is fierce and that ‘grantees’ will be determined by lottery. We will learn more after the first of the year).

\* *Storm Water, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW)*

## Portage Lake Shopping Bags

The PLA is raising funds by selling these extra large shopping bags. Be green and show your Portage Pride by buying a pair of these for \$5 (one for each hand). They will be for sale at Lakeside Treats next summer when they reopen on Main Street across from the village park, or you can get them now if you live in the area by calling Al Taylor at 889-0205.



## Invasive Species Committee Report

After 5 years of treating the invasive species in and around Portage Lake, our phragmites remains under control. Eurasian watermilfoil continues to be a challenge as it has formed a hybrid, making it more difficult to identify and treat. Also it has moved to deeper areas of the lake due to increased water clarity caused by invasive zebra and quagga mussels.

Extensive surveys of our lake with the latest state of the art equipment provides us a definitive baseline to monitor future weed growth and water quality. Data in the 2013 report shows clearly that 5 years of treatment has not harmed our native plants, since the agents used specifically target the milfoil while improving fish habitat.

The invasive Species Committee is working with the Watershed and Township Board to implement a management plan for the next 5 year phase. We have started the process of renewing our Special Assessment District (SAD). This will require that the Township Board pass several resolutions and hold public meeting as was done in 2009. A tentative timeline has been developed so that the renewal of the SAD is completed in May 2014. This will give us time to obtain permits, complete an early spring survey, develop contracts for the applicators and do a community education program. The community education program will begin as soon as the Resolution of Intent is passed by the Township Board.



## Evelyn Sorenson Memorial Art Show

The Oliver Art Center in Frankfort, MI is holding its annual Fiber and Furniture Art show from Jan. 17-Feb. 28, 2014. This year's show is dedicated to the memory of Evelyn Sorenson who was a well known and loved Onekama artist who died May 24, 2013.

Local artists are encouraged to submit their work in this show and everyone is invited to attend the show held at 132 Coast Guard Road, just off Main Street in Frankfort.

Artists of fiber, furniture and sculpture can bring their work to the gallery on Jan. 11 from 10am-4pm and/or Jan. 12 from noon - 4pm. Rules for submission and forms can be downloaded at the website- [www.oliverartcenterfrankfort.org](http://www.oliverartcenterfrankfort.org)

At the Friday evening reception (Jan. 17 from 5-7 pm) there will be information about Evelyn's life and some examples of her work. There is no cost to attend the reception or the show.

Before her death, Evelyn donated a piece of her work to the PLA for fundraising purposes. This piece will be on display at the show and bids can be submitted for purchase of the work in a silent auction format.

Contact information for the Oliver Art Center: Phone 231-352-4151 or Email [info@oliverartcenterfrankfort.org](mailto:info@oliverartcenterfrankfort.org)

## 2013 Supplement to the State of the Lake Report

*By Herb Lenon (Summarized from BreAnne Grabill's PLM Report, 2013)*

Management Goals for the Portage Lake Study:

1. The primary goal is to control exotic invasive plants to the maximum extent possible, and to encourage native plants throughout the lake to promote an overall healthy ecosystem for recreational use and a healthy fisheries, as well as maintaining the riparian enjoyment of the water resources and the value of their properties. Aquatic plant management should preserve species diversity and cover of native plants to provide suitable habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms, while avoiding interference with recreational uses of the lake (e.g., swimming, boating and fishing). Chara (Muskgrass) is a highly desired plant, typically low growing, keeping the water clear and slowing down the invasion of exotic weed species through competition. It should be allowed to grow throughout the lake except where it may interfere with swimming or boating. It is presently the most abundant plant species in the lake. Invasive terrestrial plants (e.g., Phragmites and Purple Loosestrife) should be controlled along the shoreline and adjacent wetlands where present. Both species can quickly take over the wetland forming monocultures, crowding out native vegetation and indigenous waterfowl habitats.
2. Water quality monitoring and vegetation surveys must be continued and is essential for preserving a high quality lake by detecting changes that may adversely affect the lake, and to target and reduce external loading of nutrients. Proper watershed management techniques should be encouraged and applied wherever possible.
3. Outreach/education of the Portage Lake residents is important and should be on-going in an attempt to communicate lake activities and management goals. The Portage Lake website can help to keep residents informed and communicate activities and practices concerning the watershed and lake management.

Lake Monitoring – This involves several components:

1. Complete aquatic vegetation (aquatic macrophyte) surveys of the entire lake done according to the State of Michigan AVAS (Aquatic Vegetative Assessment Survey) Method which gives the distribution and densities of the species found. This is performed twice each year (June and September) to identify all native species and, thus, helps to determine and maintain the desired species diversity. At the same time exotic invasive species densities and locations are mapped for treatment. Several post treatment surveys monitor the success of all treatments.
2. Algal (phytoplankton) population is monitored twice each year to identify phytoplankton composition and diversities which is essential as the base of all food chains.
3. Along with phytoplankton samples, zooplankton populations were identified to determine their composition and diversity as the second level in the food chains.
4. Lake water quality monitoring included 12 parameters being analyzed for each of the two deep basins and for three selected shoreline sites, all done twice a year (June and September). In addition, tests for E-coli were performed at three designated shoreline sites.
5. Tributary water quality was monitored for ten parameters twice a year (May and September) in six streams near the outlet of each as important potential contributors to lake quality.
6. Four storm drains were monitored for ten parameters in May as important potential contributors to lake quality.



## 2013 Supplement to the State of the Lake Report Con't

### Results and Conclusions:

1. Aquatic Vegetation: There were 19 native species found in the lake and this represents a very good diversity and stable population of native plants and confirms the selectivity of the herbicides used to control the exotic invasive species. Two exotic invasive species were found again this year, Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) and curly leaf pondweed. 129.75 acres of EWM was treated. The curly leaf pondweed is an aggressive plant but was not found in the September survey due largely to natural die-off midsummer which is common for this species and this allows for the native species to increase in its place. Starry stonewort, an invasive exotic species has not been seen yet in Portage Lake but we need to be on the watch for it as it is in Michigan and can be very detrimental to a lake ecosystem. The most common plant species found were chara, wild celery, sago pondweed, richardson pondweed, thinleaf pondweed, naiad, and coontail.

2. Phytoplankton: There were 13 genera of phytoplankton algae present with the most common being diatoms, which is also the most beneficial, and thus, a good thing. The least desirable is the blue-green algae which was the least abundant in June but became the most abundant in September. This is of some concern yet not at high enough level to be a problem at this time but needs to be watched in the future. Blue-green algae can release toxins that may cause problems and also form an ugly scum on the surface of the water when populations become abundant. Zebra mussels will not filter it out but do filter the green algae and this is why the bluegreens become dominant later in the season replacing the more desirable green algae.

3. Zooplankton: They were diverse and represented by three key genera. So both the phytoplankton and zooplankton populations represent a healthy water quality structure and supportive of a healthy, robust fishery.

4. Water Quality Results: a.) Temperature and oxygen profiles in the two deep basins indicated that on June 4<sup>th</sup> the lake was already stratified with a thermocline at approximately 20 ft. The dissolved oxygen was high down to the bottom and somewhat higher in basin 1 than basin 2. On September 16<sup>th</sup> the lake was still stratified but nearly anoxic (no oxygen) near the bottom in both basins, lower in basin 1 than 2. This is a common symptom of eutrophication and leads to elevated internal nutrient loading with a release of phosphorus from the sediment. These results are consistent with previous years and remains a concern to watch. b.) pH, alkalinity, conductivity were consistent with previous years.

c.) Secchi Disk values were significantly lower in the two basins than the past two to three years indicating a lowered clarity of water, but is dependent on many variables, e.g. the person doing the reading, amount of sunlight, time of day, wave action, time of year, plankton population, etc. They were determined this year by a different observer and in June 4<sup>th</sup> and September 16<sup>th</sup> instead of May and August. That alone could make the difference. This is something to watch and evaluate next year.

d.) Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and Turbidity are parameters that are related to Secchi Disk values and they do help to explain the Secchi Disk results this year. The TDS and Turbidity results were both significantly higher in both basins this year which correlates well with the lower clarity of water indicated by the Secchi Disk results and may well be due to the time of year of sampling. This is evident as well with much of the earlier results when Secchi Disk values were lower at these same times of year. e.) Total Phosphorus (TP) values were somewhat lower in both basins than previous years which is a good thing but needs to be monitored closely each year since the lake is phosphorus limited, which means an increase in phosphorus will result in an increase in plant production. The shoreline sites were significantly higher than the basins, especially in June, which might suggest runoff, stream input or the stirring up of the shallow bottom sediment and releasing phosphorus. f.) Total Kjeldhal Nitrogen (TKN) were somewhat higher than previous years and especially in September samples. This parameter needs to be broken down into nitrates and ammonia component values in the future to indicate if internal loading of nitrogen is a factor. g.) Chlorophyll-a values were consistent with previous years or slightly lower and are low to moderate overall. This is an indicator of the primary production in the lake. h.) E-Coli values

5. Tributary Water Quality: Six tributaries were sampled on May 10 and September 16: Glenn, McCormick, Onekama, Schimke, Dunham, and Hansen. a.) TDS and Turbidity were significantly higher than lake values, thus, a sediment load concern somewhat. b.) TP was significantly higher than lake values in Glenn, McCormick, Hansen, and Schimke in May. Schimke and Hansen were higher in September. These streams are a concern at times. c.) TKN was higher than the lake in June but about the same in September, thus, all these streams may be a concern. d.) Conductivity was somewhat higher than the lake in both June and September. This corresponds with the TDS and turbidity results. e.) pH was consistent with the lake. f.) Flows ranged from 0.8 ft/sec (Onekama) to 2.5 ft/sec (McCormick) in May and from 0.6 ft/sec (Glenn) to 1.6 ft/sec (Schimke) in September.

6. Storm Drains: Four storm drains were sampled on May 10<sup>th</sup> during a slight rainfall. a.) Dissolved oxygen was high. b.) pH was typically lower than the lake, thus slightly more acidic. c.) Conductivity, TDS, and Turbidity were typically higher than the lake, thus, some concern. d.) TP was significantly higher than the lake and is a concern. e.) TKN was significantly higher than June in the lake and is a concern. f.) Flows were slow-to-quick and murky-to-clear.



4860 1/2 Main Street • Onekama  
(231) 889-0222

*Appearance*  
**Salon & Spa**

## Appearance Salon is Now Offering Bonded Hair Replacement

*A letter from owner, Linda English*

Hello friends,

As we all know life is a journey. Today I'd like to share a little of my journey with Appearance Salon & Spa. Nearly 14 years ago the salon doors opened. We've offered haircuts, styling, nails, facials, massage, tanning and later a gift area. Thanks to your patronage we have been successful with all of our endeavors.

As we begin our 14th year, we are so excited to present hair replacement services. We know there is a great need in northern Michigan. Hair loss from illness, heredity or stress can leave a person feeling helpless. As we've started to spread the word about these services, many people have expressed excitement – our clients, friends, colleagues, and even health care professionals (who want to find ways to support their patients). Appearance Salon is now offering natural, hand-tied, lightweight wigs and hair units. Because we know privacy is important, these services will be offered in a newly decorated, fully equipped, private room.

In order to experience first-hand what our clients would feel, I decided to bond a unit of hair on my own head. I experienced so many emotions as I got ready for the service. My inner child did a lot of talking...

Would I like it?

Would it be uncomfortable?

Would it look artificial?

Would people stare?

Could I style it? (I'm a hair stylist)

As it turned out, it was one of my best decisions ever. Wherever I go, people compliment my beautiful hair. I am delighted to receive so many compliments, but most of all I feel even more confident in the services we can offer anyone in our community who is experiencing hair loss.

As we enter our 14th year, we thank you for your patronage and hope to see you soon. Maybe for a little Appearance?!

Warmly,

Linda English

Appearance Salon & Spa

## Onekama Consolidated Schools Continuing Education Classes Winter 2014

Eight Week Classes **start** Monday January 13, 2014 and **end** Saturday March 8, 2014

### Indoor Cycling Plus

This cardio workout is intense but fun. In addition to cycling, this class includes up to 15 minutes of core and balance exercise. Cycling portion is conducted on indoor upright stationary bicycles to high energy music. Focus on interval training and techniques used in an outdoor ride. Beginners and experienced cyclists welcome. Class is instructor led but self-paced. Our new package format allows you to sign up for as many classes during the week as you would like\*.

Monday with Kim 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Activity Room \$30

Wednesday with Kim 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Activity Room \$30

**\*Sign up for two or more indoor cycling classes and pay only \$25 per class!**



## **Onekama Consolidated Schools Continuing Education Classes Con't Winter 2014**

### **Indoor Video Cycling**

Like indoor cycling but with a video component that simulates traveling over terrain. Destinations include tropical islands, national parks and other scenic areas. 8 sessions.

Saturday with Kim and Leann 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the Activity Room \$25

### **Power 60**

Take your Boot Camp experience to the next level. Sixty minutes of indoor cycling, running, and core strength training in interval format to heart pumping music. This hybrid class provides the best of everything in the fastest 60 minutes of your day. No boredom allowed in this session. You'll be changing it up every three to four minutes. Medium to high intensity workout. 16 sessions.

Monday and Wednesday with Leann 6:00 to 7:00 a.m. in the Activity Room \$50

### **Zumba**

Ditch the Workout and Join the Party! This fun Latin dance style workout develops all muscle groups and ramps up your cardio. Get your friends together and get your Zumba on!

Tuesday and Thursday with Tonya 6:45 to 7:45 p.m. in the Activity Room \$50.

### **Stretch to the Core**

A strong core and flexibility are your most important assets regardless of your fitness level. This class incorporates core strength training, stretching and development of flexibility for an overall effective yet not so strenuous workout. 16 sessions.

Tuesday and Thursday with Tonya 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Fitness Room \$50

### **Gentle Cardio and Core**

Want some low impact cardio and strength in the core area but not the killer Boot Camp experience? This class uses light step aerobics, power walking, other types of cardio equipment and easier strength and balance training in an interval format. 16 sessions

Monday and Wednesday with Leann 5:30 to 6:30 in the Fitness Room \$50

### **After School Pillars of Fitness**

Looking for a workout that will get your motor running at the end of the school day? Want to learn more about how to design your own workout? Each week we explore one of the Pillars of Fitness: Cardiorespiratory Fitness, Muscle Strength, Muscle Endurance, Core Strength, Flexibility, Balance, Speed and Agility.

Monday and Wednesday with Leann 4 to 5 p.m. in the Fitness Room \$50

### **Personal Fitness Training**

Need a fitness plan that is more individualized? Work with a trainer to assess your overall health and fitness level, then begin an exercise plan specific to your needs. The \$100 price includes a 2 hr. fitness assessment and orientation, and (2) one hour sessions that introduce you to your individualized program.

Contact Mary at 889-4251 to set up an appt.

### **Winter Quilt Class 7 weeks**

(Beginner skill level, and above)

Make a sample quilt with 7 basic blocks using rectangles, triangles and squares. Classes will include: cutting, pinning, stitching 1/4 inch seams, pressing, layout of design and binding.

We will use the book **Start Quilting** by Alex Anderson and each person needs a copy- available at Two Sisters Quilt Shop in Bear Lake or online. Class is 6pm-8pm and will start **Tuesday Jan. 14 and continue Jan. 21, 28, Feb. 4, 18, 25 and March 4** (no class on Feb. 11)

Cost \$40, plus supplies which are not included in instructor's fee.



### **Facebook and Pinterest**

This is an intro class to learn about these popular online social media. Come and learn all the tricks and tips on Wednesday, **Feb. 5th and Feb. 19th** 5:30-7pm. Fee is \$7 per class, sign up for one or both. Instructor:

Kelsey Acker. Location: Media Center

**Sign up for all of these classes by calling OCS Cont. Ed at 889-4251**

## Brief History Of Portage Point Inn

The original hotel, which currently is the lobby, bar, and townhouse condo areas, opened its doors in June 1903. It was marketed as a family resort to get away from the heat, humidity, and smog of the big city. You were lured by the idea that breezes from Lake Michigan keep you cool and bug free. The areas artesian wells offered great medicinal properties. Most of the early visitors were coming from Chicago. The primary method of getting to Portage Point Inn was by steamship, which would dock in front of the Inn because of the natural deep water harbor. If wealthy enough, you could get a room in the Inn but furnished and unfurnished tents were also available to rent. It was common for the wives and children to spend most of the summer and the husband would commute on the weekends on the ships. The owners of the Inn also acquired most of the property on the peninsula and the Inn was a great way to attract guests and sell them adjacent lots. In 1908, the cottage we refer to as Hull House, was built and in 1910 the Pavilion dance hall was added. There was a water taxi service to shuttle guests from the Inn to the village of Onekama on the other side of Portage Lake. The steamship lines bought the Inn in about 1912 and immediately started expansion, adding onto the dining room and building the three story structure we refer to as the Main Hotel. The building was made up of 55 rooms. Six of the rooms had private baths but the rest used the community baths at the end of the halls. There were 2 community baths at each end of the hallway on each floor. The hotel also had a hand operated elevator to shuttle the steamer trunks from ground floor to store in the attic. That elevator can still be seen in the attic. Each floor had an access door to the elevator but these have been turned into storage closets. The next building added was the 3 story, Beech Lodge in 1916, consisting of 26 rooms, serviced by 4 community bathrooms. During the 1920's there were nine new cottages built. Six we call the Dollhouses because they are nothing more than a small bedroom with a bath. The three other cottages added are called Lakeview, Rexwood, and Avalon and are 2 bedroom units with some living room space. In about 1935, JJ Smith bought the Inn after his hotel burnt down in Ludington. He is the most renowned of all the Portage Point Inn owners and had the Inn until about 1959. During his tenure, the Inn was so popular, you would wait for an invitation to come back. If you were unwilling to participate in all the Inn's guest activities, then JJ would not invite you back. I have many guests still visiting to this day that tell stories about the JJ days. After JJ Smith, there was a change of ownership about every decade until the resort closed in 1988 and sat empty for five years.

Northwoods Development, llc bought the Inn in June 1993 and that is when I arrived. I was employed as General Manager until June of 2010. From the very beginning, the resort, in the summer, has always catered to families and family reunions. With the renovation of the property, this seasonal resort has become a year round property.

*Jeff Sternberger*

*General Manager, Portage Point Inn & Marina*

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*Portage Point Inn and Marina has a new owner, Windfall Landings, LLC, which is run by Bob Gezon. He has hired back Jeff Sternberger as the general owner. Plans are under way to first connect the sewer line, hopefully before summer, to the Inn and abandon the septic fields. Hopefully, when the sewer line is dug, the bike path can be widened. This summer will be a transition year. The dining room, pool, and game room will not be open while the infrastructure, water and sewer, is strengthened. If all goes well, the following year we will see a renovated hotel, dining room, kitchen, pool, and marina. Work is also under way to create a water taxi service to shuttle people from the Inn and marina to the village of Onekama and visitors from Onekama out to the Portage Point Inn. This year the Inn is taking reservations for condominium and cottage rentals as well as marina slip rentals. For more information, contact Jeff Sternberger at 231-392-2080*

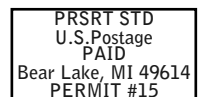
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JANUARY 2014 NEWSLETTER

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Portage Lake Association • P.O. Box 493 • Onekama MI, 49675



**POSTAL PATRON**