



Winter 2019

Protecting Torch Lake For 25 Years

TLPA Enters Its 25th Year of Service; Adopts a Strategic Plan to Move Forward

Twenty five years ago on October 28, 1994, the Torch Lake Property Owners Association [which later reorganized as the Torch Lake Protection Alliance for 501(c)(3) tax status] was established to focus exclusively on Torch Lake. Over the years, TLPA has engaged in numerous activities to safeguard, protect, and preserve the lake and its environment.

Strategic Plan

Working to continue the efforts of the previous 25 years, the board of directors of TLPA recently developed its strategic plan with the help of a professional facilitator. In order to develop objectives, the board first had to update TLPA's vision and mission statements. The following were agreed to:

Vision Statement:

A healthy Torch Lake environment that is enjoyed and respected by all.

Mission Statement:

To preserve the beauty of Torch Lake and its watershed and to protect its environment for the enjoyment of all.

The board was next asked to develop priorities and objectives for the organization. To aid in this effort, the board first had to list TLPA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The board noted, for example, that TLPA has a strong track record defending the property rights of its members (e.g., the sandbar injunction and opposing the proposed boat launch on the west side of the lake). A weakness might be that the board members are growing older and might not have the stamina in the future to serve as watch dogs for the community. An opportunity exists to enlist the help of the various township boards to monitor "game-changing" events that might occur. But the threat of changing demographics brought about by external circumstances (e.g., an increase in short-term rentals) might result in fewer members who are interested in the welfare of Torch Lake.

The next step was to develop the priorities and objectives of the organization. Priorities are the primary goals that TLPA plans to achieve in the next 3 to 5 years. These are internal as opposed to external goals, meaning that they will be used by TLPA to guide and self-check its activities and decisions. The board established the following priorities:

Priorities:

- A. Maximize communication with members and the public;***
- B. Develop robust programs for the protection of Torch Lake; and***
- C. Establish a board that is resilient and effective with a clear leadership progression.***

Objectives, or action steps, were set for each priority. For example, by June of 2019, the board plans to identify or hire a communications director (see Priority A above). Similarly, by June 30, 2019, the board intends to develop a leadership training and succession plan for its key positions (see Priority C).

The TLPA board now has a strategic plan to guide its activities over the next 3 to 5 years.

Membership News

Thank you for supporting TLPA in its efforts to protect Torch Lake. We have some critical issues facing us, including finding the cause and remedy for golden brown algae and monitoring and helping control the activities on our sand bars. Another goal is to help educate riparians of the damage caused by excessive nutrients from lawn fertilizers and outdated septic systems. There are also the issues of seasonal rentals and riparian rights. These are all complicated issues that need to be addressed.

Our current membership represents approximately one third of the property owners on Torch Lake. There truly is strength in numbers – that’s why it’s important for everyone on the lake to be a member. So, what can you do? First, renew your current membership, then help us to recruit your neighbors and friends. We will identify your neighbors who are not members and help you with talking points and reasons for becoming a TLPA member. It’s important that we all work together to protect this beautiful lake. If you are willing to assist us, please contact Bruce Hulteen at bmhulteen@gmail.com or call 616-560-3952.

If you have already renewed your membership for 2019, thank you. If not, you can either renew on line at www.torchlakeprotectionalliance.org or use the return envelope provided in your renewal notice to mail in your check. Please renew as soon as possible; sending out reminders costs us time and money. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Barbara Carton at cartonjandb@torchlake.com or 231-377-4325.

Thank you

Bruce Hulteen, Membership Chair

TLPA Board of Directors

Greg Payne	Randy Asmus
Barb Carton, Vice President	Bruce Hulteen
Bob Milliron, Secretary	Gary Petty
Norm Neuenschwander, Treasurer	Dick Gray
Gerard Ozanne	Sue Kelly

Brad Gerlach, Executive Liaison

Welcome New Members

Barry Godwin

Dave & Cyndi Senatore

Ted & Karen Stone

John & Deb Obrecht

Asim & Teri Yunus

Jeff Kresnak

Michael & Catherine O’Hare

G. Casey Wiggins

Chad & Jennifer Caudill

Melinda Jetts

Doug & Karen Giblett

Jacquelynn Clayton and
Michael Wakeland

Dave and Niki Martin

Memorials

Andrew & Trish Narwold

For Carolyn Robbins

Michelle & Berry Zeeman

For Mary & Oliver Relyea

Honorarium

In honor of Dan Boone’s TLPA board service—a donation to the Legal Defense Fund from Barb and John Carton



New Member Joins TLPA Board

TLPA has a new board member, Gerard (Jerry) M. Ozanne, MD, who has owned property on Torch Lake since the 1950's. His family is related to the Norris family, who arrived here about 1900, and who have been actively working to protect Torch Lake for years.

Jerry has two engineering degrees and a medical degree from the University of Michigan. His residency was in anesthesiology and he recently retired as Clinical Professor Emeritus from the University of California, San Francisco, where he taught and was Director of the UCSF Anesthesia Residency program. In addition, he worked for the VA Medical Center and co-directed the national VA program to implement computerized record keeping systems for ICU's and OR suites.

Over the years Jerry has noticed slow intrusions into what he regards as the unique and unparalleled qualities of Torch Lake. He and his family feel that systematic monitoring and investigations will be necessary to identify the environmental and usage challenges that are placing the lake at risk of deterioration.

Jerry and his wife, Linda, have two daughters and grandchildren who all love Torch Lake. TLPA looks forward to both Jerry and his wife assisting in our efforts to preserve it.

Focus on Lee Scott, Former TLPA Board Chairman

In 1994, Lee Scott took his wife Doris to look for property "Up North". Although Doris was born in Pennsylvania and lived her adult life in urban areas, she took one look at the first property they were shown on Torch Lake, and told Lee, "This might not be the house, but this is the lake!" They ended up purchasing that property and using the existing house on weekends and built a new home moving to it full-time in 2005. They also became TLPA members.

Lee, with a strong belief in community service, served on the Torch Lake Township Planning Commission. He also agreed to become a TLPA board member, serving in many capacities over nine years including Board Chairman.

They love being here year-round, with Doris adjusting to the more rural area quickly. Their daughter is a special education teacher in Petoskey, and their son recently moved downstate, hoping at some point to return to this area. Lee keeps busy hand-carving wooden signs of antique car and motorcycle logos in his workshop, and is a member of the Cruisin' Pirates Car Club.

Lee would like property owners to realize that, "For those who live on this beautiful lake, it is our responsibility to take care of it now and in the future".

TLPA, as an organization, still maintains its focus on protecting the lake, although it takes more effort now, Lee says. Over the years, he has watched as larger year-round homes are replacing the old cottages, and bright lights are creeping into the "dark star-lit sky". Thus, we need to stay vigilant.

News from Lansing



The following legislative action occurred during the Michigan legislature's lame duck session in December:

Senate Bill 1211 was passed and signed by the Governor. It provides for a relaxing of restrictions involving use of wetlands.

House Bills 5752 & 5753 would have established state and local standards/codes for installation and inspection of septic systems. Both bills were passed out of committee but were not passed on the House floor.

House Bill 4503 and Senate Bill 329 would have prevented local governments from establishing ordinances regarding rental of properties. Neither bill made it out of their respective committees and were not considered for a vote by the House or Senate.



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Oh Starry Night

We hear concerns from members and others regarding excessive residential lighting--not only the amount, but the long hours and the brightness, even when no one is there. Continuous night lights can impair lake views, limit star viewing, affect wildlife habitat, even cause sleep deprivation for neighbors. On this topic, the November 2018 Elk-Skegemog Lake Assoc. newsletter featured an article titled "What happened to the Milky Way?" that is informative and thought-provoking. Visit www.elk-skegemog.org to read the research and suggestions.

ASSISTANCE NEEDED

TLPA is looking for an experienced volunteer to assist in developing and implementing a marketing/communication plan for our organization. If you are interested and have expertise in these areas, please contact Bruce Hulteen at bmhulteen@gmail.com or 616-560-3952.

Support Our Business Members

They Support TLPA

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Chemical Control

Maple Ridge Construction

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Torch Lake Café

Village Market