



# INDIAN LAKE UPDATE

FALL 2020

## 2019 OFFICERS

President – Dale Frymyer  
Vice President – Randy Wax  
Treasurer – Pat Blinn  
Interim Secretary – Linda Coil

## Board Members

2018: Sharon DeVault  
Pete Gerace  
2019: Pete Lowe

2020: Rachel Kubic  
Charlie Strete

## Committee Chairperson

PR/ Communications – Randy Wax  
Memorial Trees – Dale Frymyer  
Parks/ Dredging Liaison – Bob Easterday  
ILDC Vounteers – Linda Coil  
Membership – Dave Leiter  
Legislative – Sharon DeVault  
Special Events – Larry Blinn  
Park Volunteers – Charlie Strete/  
Jeff Garlock  
Historian – Dave Helgeson

## MEETINGS

All are welcome to attend!  
Our meetings are held at the Indian Lake State Park Campground Multi-Purpose Building the third Wednesday of every month except December. Meetings begin at 7:30 pm and last approximately one hour.

## Key Dates to Remember

Maple Syrup and Pancake Breakfast  
March 13 & 14



## A Look Back and a Peek Ahead

Despite the lack of fund-raising opportunities, the ILDC still were able to accomplish many projects in 2020.

- ILDC sponsorship of the Maple Syrup Festival and Pancake Breakfast. We purchased equipment for the sugar shack to allow us to produce real maple syrup. 2020 event was cancelled one week before festival due to Covid-19 shutting down the park.
- Continued design/plan/fundraising for an all-inclusive playground at Fox Island. Currently at \$80K of \$300K target.
- ILDC volunteers straightened memorial tree posts and trees, trimmed trees, replaced dead trees, put down river rock, and picked up trash.
- ILDC volunteers cleaned up and weedwacked the spillway and guardrail area between the Wedge and Aries Buildings.
- ILDC volunteers once again took responsibility for landscaping and planting flowers around state park entrance signs, including two new locations. These volunteers also maintained the sign islands throughout the year.
- The Indian Lake Memorial Tree and Bench program continued this year with the addition of 31 memorial trees and 10 memorial benches
- ILDC Day! and Fall Festival events were cancelled due to Covid-19 shutting down the park.
- Maintained the nine hole disc golf course at Old Field Beach

### What to expect from ILDC in 2021?

- Looking to expand the Maple Syrup Festival and Pancake Breakfast with exhibits and vendors. Hopefully ILDC can have this fund-raising event next year. We are looking for volunteers to help with the maple syrup demonstration.
- Continue the Indian Lake Memorial Tree and Bench Program.
- Move forward on the design/fund-raising and installation of an all-inclusive playground at Fox Island (target completion in 2021).
- Continue the landscaping and flower planting around state park signage (11 locations). New areas will be added for 2021.
- Maintain the disc golf course. Hopefully sponsor a tournament this year.
- Continue design/ plan and fund-raising efforts for an Indian Lake gateway sign.
- Our continued ILDC sponsorship of the ILDC Day! event and co-sponsor of Fall Festival
- Work with new State Park manager to improve all aspects of our beautiful state park

## Volunteerism at Work!

2020 was a fantastic year for our volunteers completing a great amount of work projects at the lake! We were able to work outside in beautiful weather, enjoy fellowship and continue to work at improving the lake area.

Volunteers met approximately every other week to jointly work at:

- Repairing memorial tree posts by augering new holes in the ground for the posts, sawing off rotten sections and repositioning. Approximately 100 posts were repaired. Typically three people shared running the killer auger.
- Trimming trees of suckers, low hanging branches and dead branches. This helps to improve tree health, looks and made mowing easier for the state workers.
- Straightened and secured approximately 100 trees
- Removal of dead trees around the different areas of the parks.
- Planted a few trees to replace ones that had died.
- Trimmed grass around trees at Post Office and Fox Islands throughout the summer, trimmed grass around trees on the south and west areas as we could. We also trimmed all weeds/grass from the Wedge to Aries buildings on both sides of the road. This made for great viewing of the Ring of Fire display.
- Every ODNR sign identifying park areas was planted with flowers and greenery by volunteers. Even the Blackhawk shelter house was addressed. These signs are what people see upon entering the respective parks. Many signs are maintained year over year by the same volunteers. They take pride in how they look and obviously do a super job as compliments are often received
- Flowers were planted along the bridge guardrail going into Fox Island and the guardrail entering Post Office Island.
- Another six tons of river rock was added to the planting area entering Fox Island.
- Endless amounts of trash was picked up throughout the spring/summer/fall months. Some was done on a scheduled weekly basis while some was when people were available.
- Three dead trees were scheduled to be cut up in October at Fox Island. One dead tree was cut in September at Post Office Island.

While working, we developed a very good group of volunteers and had fun accomplishing the tasks. Thank each and every ILDC member for what you do in giving back to our precious community.

Three new members were obtained from walkers using the bike path when they saw the ILDC members out working. Two of them joined in the volunteering. One even brought her family out to help as a birthday present from her family.

As volunteers, we work at our own pace, take on what we are comfortable with and come and go as needed. No one is asked to do anything, it is all volunteerism.

There was no HondaGO assistance this year due to the covid.

I am sure there are multiple other projects completed by individuals I have left out and I apologize for this. It is not intentional.

## Strong Roots Form the Indian Lake Memorial Tree Program *by Dale Frymyer*

This year the Indian Lake Memorial Tree and Bench program increased by 31 trees and 10 benches. We currently have 701 trees planted and 17 benches installed around our beautiful state park. The Memorial benches have become very popular and also provide additional funding for mulch to be placed around memorial trees. On multiple occasions ILDC volunteers reset the wood posts at memorial trees as many were leaning or have completely come out of the ground. In addition many tree were re-staked thus allowing them to grow straighter in the future. To those helpful volunteers, I would like to thank you for your efforts. The ILDC goal still exists to edge, spray and mulch around each memorial tree as time and funds are available.

The cost to purchase a memorial tree will increase in 2021. The new cost will be \$350, which includes the tree with a one year warranty and stainless steel laser etched plaque on a composite base. We are trying to procure larger diameter trees with the hope they will have a better chance of survival. A memorial bench can still be purchased for \$1000 which includes a 6' composite bench mounted on a concrete pad with a memorial plaque. Thank you again to those volunteers that have helped in pouring the concrete pads and mounting the benches. Indian Lake Memorial Tree and Bench order forms are available at the State Park office, Choice Properties Real Estate office, The Depot in Lakeview and online at [www.ILDCohio.org](http://www.ILDCohio.org).



# Aquatic Biology 101

by Dave Helgeson, former  
Park Manager and former  
ILDC President

The waters of Indian Lake... they are a changing! About two months ago I went out to my seawall and looked down and low and behold I could see lake bottom at a depth of four feet. Unheard of! Not only that, today I can look out 50 feet in the channel and can see lake bottom at a depth of five-feet. Granted I live on a channel where the water is relatively calm and boat traffic not as busy as the open lake, however, water clarity has improved dramatically all over the lake.

What has caused this phenomenon? I am no scientist but here is my observation. First of all farming practices in the watershed have reduced soil runoff onto the lake. The majority of farmers subscribe to no-till farming (where crop stubble is left on the fields after harvest. This stubble decreases run off during rain events), The practice of using cover crops is also increasing which is even more effective in keeping soil up on the fields. Quite a few farmers use filter strips, plant trees, plant grass waterways and contain livestock manure - all techniques that help keep our lake clean. The Indian Lake Watershed has played a key role by encouraging and incentivizing farmers to use these practices.

Secondly there are now zebra mussels in Indian Lake. Zebra mussels are a non-native invasive species that came down from Lake Erie attached to boat bottoms, lower units, and in bilges. They look like small clams the size of your fingernail. Zebra mussels filter out algae resulting in a clearer lake. The downside is they cling to docks and underwater structures. Their effect on fishing is questionable. They have not seem to have a significant effect on the perch and walleye fishery in Lake Erie.

Lastly, climate change is a factor in the lake becoming clearer. Note I use the term climate change and not global warming caused by humankind which can be debated one way or another. Climate change is pretty evident with the frequency of hurricanes, fires out West, mild winters, dry summers, etc. This summer has been no exception. It has been very dry with one exception. On the night of September 7th a narrow banded front stalled over west central Ohio dumping 4.45 inches of rain over Indian Lake according to Wayne Wickerham, our

local official weather monitor. Normally when we get several inches of rain the lake gets what I call the "chocolate milk" effect from farm run off and erosion. Not this time! That morning I went outside to see the chocolate milk, and not so! The lake was as clear as ever. All 4.45 inches had soaked into the dry ground. Climate change.

The biggest negative effect of a clearer Indian Lake has been the growth of aquatic vegetation (weeds) as sunlight penetrates further into the

lake resulting in vegetative growth. In some calm water areas like the Game Reserve (east side channels) the weeds are so thick that navigation is very difficult. Propellers and lower units get tangled in the stuff. The park's weed harvester was designed to cut channels through lily pads which are really spatterdock (Google it!), however it is ineffective in removing submerged weeds. The park has done some limited herbicide spraying of aquatic weeds in small problem areas. Spraying of large areas is cost prohibited and only a temporary fix. There also may be some environmental concerns.

Interesting is the way the fishery is changing

at Indian Lake. There has always been a small population of yellow perch and white bass, but never in the numbers that are now being caught and reported by fishermen. Mostly small, but larger sizes are starting to appear. The lake has also has a very good channel catfish population, however in the past several years large flathead catfish are also being caught. 20-30 pound flatheads are showing up at the annual catfish derby. Whether this changing fishery is due to increased clarity and a weedy habitat is something for the fishery biologist to determine.

The transition of Indian Lake to a clearer lake will present some new management challenges. Is this a long term proposition? How will this affect the fishery in the future? The preponderance of aquatic vegetation will have to be managed both from a fish habitat and recreational side. What will be the impact of Zebra mussels and other invasive species? The "new look" Indian Lake will have to be monitored closely to preserve our great recreational resource.





# Remembering Nathan Thatcher

I've been staring at this screen for hours wondering how I could describe this man and how he impacted ILDC and my life. I will try to keep this short.

Thank you Nathan for being part of ILDC. For ILDC, you were instrumental in the Maple Syrup Festival through your activities with the sugar shack. Nathan evaluated the situation of the syrup making equipment and building. He made suggestions on how to improve each and then made them happen. He learned how to make maple syrup by searching on-line and then learned more by trial and error. He researched the historic methods so that he could explain the processes to interested festival goers. The Indian Lake sugar shack is now known as "Thatcher's Sugar Shack."

Nathan was instrumental in ILDC installing a Disc Golf course now located at Old Field Beach. Nathan and other ILDC members designed and installed a 9 hole course to entertain visitors and residents at Indian Lake. This course will be named the "Nathan T. Thatcher Disc Golf Course".

Also, Nathan and his family repaired the Moundwood Wooden Ship playground. They repaired many areas of the structure to Nathan's standards (safe enough for his grandkids to play on it).

Nathan made me a better person! Not only was he a neighbor and co-worker for multiple decades, he was my friend. The type of friend everyone should have in their life. I miss him and wish he was here every day. Thank you, Nathan, for being part of my life. Love you, brother.

Dale Frymyer  
ILDC President

*Editor's Note: Nathan passed away on June 17, 2020 at age 56.*

*The sugar shack is located at the Indian Lake State Park campgrounds. The disc golf course is located at Old Field Beach.*

## MEMBERSHIP

Well, 2020 has been a tough year (*understatement!*). Our total members reduced to 586, which is below our 2020 target of 700 memberships. With everything going on around us the last thing on people's minds is, "Did I pay my ILDC membership dues?" We don't blame them. Yet ILDC's commitment to improving Indian Lake has not wavered. Our hope is that ILDC membership will again grow as

more and more residents and visitors become aware of the projects ILDC has completed and those we plan to complete in the near future. Membership applications will again be mailed out with the state dock permit notices in the spring. A membership application form is included below as well. Or you can go online to [www.ildcoho.org](http://www.ildcoho.org) to complete the form.

## ILDC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION \$15 Family or Business

Make checks payable to ILDC and return to ILDC, PO Box 103, Russells Point, OH 43348

Please print clearly  Check here if you would like a membership card



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mailing Address:

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### Lake Address (if different than above):

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make an additional donation to ILDC in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

for  Fox Island Playground  Other: \_\_\_\_\_