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HISTORY OF
CEDAR LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
1950 to 1975

The birth of the Cedar Lake Improvement Association was much more than a few dates and names. In an effort to turn back the clock twenty-five years and relive those good old days, Senator Ernest Keppler has provided us with the following edited quotes from his daily diary of 1950:

Sunday, July 2nd., 1950: In the morning our family "attended the first organization meeting of the Cedar Lake Advancement Association." Ben Diederich and Dr. Fred Knauf were two of the persons suggesting the formation of an organization. I recall this first meeting was held in the hall of the Cedar Lake Resort. The diary states further: "About forty were present. We are very enthusiastic about it and the possibility of future results."

Friday, July 7th.: "Several of us drove to Crystal Lake where we observed the operation of a handy mechanical contraption called a weed cutter. This machine, owned by the Crystal Lake Advancement Association, is used to control their lake's weed problem. It is like a metal raft with a motor. The thing-a-ma-jig can go forwards or backwards. The cutters are located in the front. There is one cutter extending outward and frontwards on each side, with a third cutter like a cross bar, extending from the end of one cutter to the end of the other. The what-chamacallet does its job well."

Sunday, July 9th.: "We had a meeting of we temporary directors, after which we had a membership meeting (a little over thirty were present), at the Pavilion's dance hall, where we listened to an interesting talk of organization and weed problems by Crystal Lake Association's President, Gerhardt (Gary) Hinze. We also discussed other problems such as speed boats versus fishermen. The main event was the election of officers, all by unanimous ballot. Officers elected for a term ending Sept., 1951, are: Me, Ernest C. Keppler as President, Dr. Harold Brandenburg as Vice-President, Dr. Fred Knauf as Secretary, John Erbstoeszer as Treasurer, and Mrs. Frank (Lydia) Keli, as Librarian."

Monday, July 10th.: My wife, two children, and I "drove to Manitowoc where I acquainted myself with the various records in the Court House's Highway Commission office and Register of Deeds. My purpose is to get a map of Cedar Lake, showing all the different properties and their owners' names."

Sunday, July 16th.: In the morning I "rowed over to the Pavilion where a successful meeting of the general membership was held for two and one-half hours, although only about twenty-five were present. We elected ten directors, passed a number of resolutions necessary for further organization of the association. Also had a short Directors' meeting."

Friday, August 4th.: In the evening, "twelve of we members of the Board of Directors of the Cedar Lake Improvement Association had a very successful meeting at Dr. Harold Brandenburg's

cottage for almost three hours. We set up seven standing committees and passed a number of necessary resolutions pertaining to organization. Although there is still various organizational work yet to be done, such as the By-Laws and Constitution, I believe it is safe to say that we are now ready to start productive work as an organization. As soon as the committees begin to function, results will gradually be forthcoming. Hallelujah!"

Sunday, August 6th.: "We all watched the speed boat races (The Sheboygan Motor Boat Association) at Cedar Lake. There were spills to make it more exciting."

Friday, August 18th.: In the evening I "spent over four hours at John Erbstoesz's cottage, being in charge of the Directors' meeting of the CLIA. We went over our Charter of Incorporation (our constitution), had committee reports, etc. Later our Legal Committee met and did a little more work."

Monday, September 4th.: "At Cedar Lake I conducted two CLIA meetings; a Board of Directors meeting and then a general membership meeting at which over forty persons were present. We now have twenty-three paid up regular members and two associate paid up members, Stanley Roeder being the first one. The meetings were very successful. We passed our By-Laws, Articles of Incorporation, and received authority to incorporate the association."

Friday, September 22nd.: I delivered the Cedar Lake Improvement Association's incorporation papers to the Secretary of State's office at the State Capitol at Madison.

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The following list is the entire first year's membership. It should be remembered that while not all of them were mentioned in the previous paragraphs, each one is entitled to an equal share in the credit for the birth of our association.

Dr. Harold Brandenburg	Henry Meiselwitz
Walter Balz (deceased)	Joe Multerer (deceased)
John A. Erbstoesz	Henry Mesch
Julius Halleen (deceased)	Rev. J. W. McElree
H. C. Hennings (deceased)	Arthur Spahn
Hensel & Prueter (deceased)	Dr. Leon Sobusch (deceased)
Elmer Jens (deceased)	C. F. Schroeder
Kettle Moraine Council, B.S.A.	C. Otto Schmidt (deceased)
Frank Keli (deceased)	Albert Weber
Dr. Fred A. Knauf	Reginold R. Worel
R.W. Kluzinski	Arthur Zimmermann (deceased)
Frank Kummer	A. F. Zurheide (deceased)
Fred Lubeley	

Early general membership meetings were held in the Library Building at Camp Rokilio, Cedar Lake Pavilion, and Wollersheim Hall at Louis Corners. Directors meetings were usually at a board member's cottage.

Funds were raised by an initial membership fee of \$15.00 plus annual dues of \$2.00. The "Ladies Auxiliary," however, provided the extra money for projects by dozens of card parties, raffles, and white-elephant sales which often accounted for one-third of the yearly receipts.

Weed control was the first project of the Association and after much investigation the first weed cutter was purchased in 1952 for \$335.00. This was replaced by a second cutter in 1965 and our present one was purchased in 1969.

The Schleswig Town Board soon found that our new CLIA could be very vocal in their demands for better road maintenance. Property tax rates were protested regularly and they were constantly reminded that cottage owners were paying over half the town taxes, with no voice in town government. In defense of the town board, they did try to cooperate with us. Roads were graded, dust control was attempted, and lake roads were named and identified with sign posts and fire numbers. Motor boat regulations and skiing hours regulations were passed according to our wishes. The Wednesday afternoon dump hours were also granted at our request.

Better fishing was a natural concern and the Association had many meetings with wardens and state personnel. A few private plantings of fish were arranged by Victor Trastek, Sr. and Harry Chermak, but attempts to get free fish from the state were stymied by regulations. In recent years the Environmental Committee under Dr. Howard Zirwes has conducted our own fish planting, spending up to \$1,000 each year for Walleye and Northern.

Cottage identification by number and location was a problem which was partially solved by arranging for printing of double sized calling cards folded once with the owner's name, cottage name, and road printed on the outside. The cottage location was "starred" on a map of the lake inside the card. This same map is used on our present letterheads. The first really good solution to the problem, however, was the 1961 Cedar Lake Directory created by Dr. Howard Zirwes. A second directory was issued in 1974 with Tom Jens doing the revision.

Early records show that lake contamination was regularly monitored by Dr. Fred Knauf. He periodically sent samples of lake water from various locations to Madison for testing until those duties were assumed by our Sanitary District.

In 1966 it became apparent that our lake population was so large that an effective means of controlling pollution, cottage expansion, and sewage treatment was necessary if we were to

keep Cedar Lake clean and livable in the years to come. Accordingly, with both apprehension and hope, much discussion and argument, the Sanitary District No. 1 of the Town of Schleswig was created. The first commissioners appointed by Fred Heckel, then President, were: Dr. Fred Knauf, Merlyn Hoefner, and Albert Deibele, Sr. Otto Winter was the first and present plumbing inspector.

In 1957 the lake water level fell alarmingly until it reached a low of 93.34 in 1958. In desperation, a delegation of lake members was sent to Madison to confer with the State Public Service and Conservation Commission to find a possible solution. They were told that we were not alone with this problem and if we were patient, the water would rise again. The board then requested Donahue & Associates of Sheboygan to investigate the possibility of pumping water from the swamp and two local ponds into our lake. This was dropped when they found it would cost over \$50,000.

The lake level did return to a satisfactory height, but started to fall again in 1967. A study of water level readings proved that over a long term period Cedar Lake would continue to rise and fall, but the lows would drop to new depths each time. The possible damage to property value as well as recreational use was enough to create demand for positive action at once. The board authorized Donahue to study the problem and find a solution. Dredging the muck out of the lake was much too costly without state help, so they concentrated on drilling a well to at least stabilize the water level and reduce the loss from evaporation during the summer months.

In 1971, after countless board meetings and many engineering studies, the Association membership requested the Sanitary District to contract and finance the drilling of a well. Under the chairmanship of Dennis Robichaud and after many battles with the DNR, drilling was started in October, 1971, and completed in March, 1972. The 601 foot well pumps 500 gallons per minute and has been classified as a municipal well which may eventually supply excellent drinking water to the entire lake. It can also provide emergency water for the local fire departments.

In 1972 the CLIA joined the Federation of Wisconsin Lake Property Owners and we now are very well represented in Madison. We are also informed of the latest state regulations and new bills which could help or harm us. The CLIA even has its "very own" bill in the legislative hopper which will enable owners of substandard lots to rebuild after a fire or natural disaster. With the sponsorship of Senator Keppler and the determined lobbying of the Federation, eventual passage of our bill is very probable. In addition, our officers have formed a local association with the other Manitowoc County lake groups to investigate and solve problems of a local nature.

If our present records were more complete and more legibly written, a greater number of important accomplishments could be listed and credit given to the proper people. Our apologies for these omissions must be due to many members.

Our CLIA was not formed only for work projects, but also for fun, and we all have happy memories of dances, card parties, fun nights, 4th of July picnics, casino nights, and other mixers.

We are also proud to have had two groups of Cedar Skiers, who thrilled thousands with their exhibitions of great talent and skill, achieving state-wide fame. The first club performed from 1960 to 1965 and the second group took over in 1970. The present club includes some children of the first club.

Early this year Jeff and Fred Gruber supervised the CLIA Bingo games at the Cedar Lake Resort. The profits of this enjoyable "gambling" are earmarked for lake rehabilitation and may possibly help us to clean out the muck from the lake bottom in the near future.

Today we have a very active association of 105 members who are happily reaping the benefits of the toil and effort of our early members, many of whom have passed on to that "Greater Cedar Lake in the Sky." There is no way to adequately show our appreciation unless each one of us, as they did, is willing to do a little more than our fair share to preserve what they have accomplished and go on to make Cedar Lake the best little lake in Wisconsin.

PRESIDENTS

1950 - 1951	Ernest Keppler
1952	Dr. Harold Brandenburg
1953 - 1954	Julius Halleen (deceased)
1955 - 1956 - 1957	R. W. Kluczinski
1958 - 1959 - 1960	Paul Salerno
1961	Richard Schmitt
1962	Dr. Howard Zirwes
1963	Pat Dewane (deceased)
1964	Leonard Robichaud
1965	Alex Karls
1966 - 1967	Fred Heckel
1968	Merlyn Hoefner
1969	Arnold Reindl
1970 - 1971	Kenneth Olm
1972 - 1973	Allen Bruggink
1974 - 1975	Dennis Robichaud