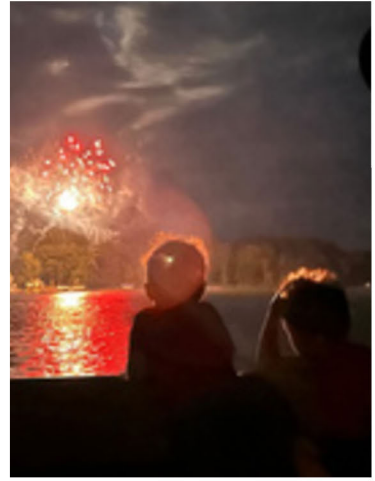


Stony Lake Newzletter

SPRING 2026

A PUBLICATION OF THE STONY LAKE ASSOCIATION



Stony Lake glory in summer and winter. "Downtown" in winter, photo by Dale Burmeister. Fireworks friends, photo by Matt Ferguson, featuring his grandkids.

A Letter from the President

As you read this the snow pictured in downtown Stony Lake is probably gone, the days are getting longer, and Stony Lake is slowly coming back to life after a long winter. Soon docks will be going in, boats will be back on the water, and familiar faces will be returning to the shoreline. It's one of the best times of the year — the start of another summer at the lake.

I'm truly honored to serve as the new President of the **Stony Lake Association (SLA)**, also known as the Stony Lake Property Owners Association. I'd like to begin by thanking our outgoing president, Jeff Larmore (don't worry, he remains on the Board), the Board, and the many volunteers who give their time and energy to keep our association strong. Their efforts have helped make Stony Lake not just a beautiful place, but a real community.

For those who are new to the area or new to the association, the SLA exists for a simple reason:

To help bring neighbors together and to help preserve the beauty, health, and enjoyment of Stony Lake for everyone who calls it home—whether for the summer or year-round.

As always, the summer calendar will be full of opportunities to get together. There will be sailboat races throughout the summer, the 4th of July weekend is packed with our fishing tournament, the ice cream social, the boat parade, and it is capped off by the Stony Lake Sparkler!

The Poker Paddle is back on July 25, and the Annual Meeting on August 1 rounds out the summer's activities sponsored by the Lake Association. This year we have something new as well. A Stony Lake Garden Tour is planned on July 11.

This summer there are also events being organized by our neighbors at the lake. There's the third annual Outdoor Summer Art Show sponsored by the Lake Effect Artists' Collective on July 4

& 5, and Antique Outboard Motor enthusiasts will host meets open to the public on June 27 & September 19. More details about these events and much more inside this issue.

Of course, some of the best moments at Stony Lake aren't scheduled at all—an early morning on the water, a quiet sunset from the dock or at the Big Lake, a quick conversation with a neighbor, floating down the Channel, an impromptu sailboat race, or joining a pontoon flotilla for a refreshment. Thank you for being part of this special community and I hope everyone has a happy, healthy, and wonderful time at Stony Lake this year!

—**Dale Burmeister**, President,
Stony Lake Association (SLA)

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- Lauri McKenna**, *Sparkler Co-Race Dir.*

For contact information and our Resource Guidebook, please visit StonyLakePropertyOwners.com



Dylan Getter, above right, age 2, was the kids fishing derby first-place winner in 2025. His mom reports that Dylan got the 25.5-inch Bowfin to the boat but Dad helped get it in. The reason: "The fish was bigger than him." Way to go Dylan! Can't wait to see what you catch when you're three. The adult winner was Logan Bedsoe. Photos by Nick Ferguson.

Last Year's Fishing Tournament Was a Blast!

Last summer's Stony Lake Fishing Tournament was one of the best we have had. There was a great number of fish caught and a great variety (Brown Trout, Steelhead, Largemouth bass, Walleye, Rock bass, Bluegill). I was surprised that no Smallmouth bass were entered. Many of the fishermen and women entered their catch early and then went back to fishing, and many had bigger fish caught after the tournament hours. This was the same for the kids' division. Here's the results:

The 2026 Tournament on Saturday, July 4 will be set up much as usual. Adults and Kids 12 and under compete separately. Trophies will be awarded for first, second and third places in both categories. The tournament runs from 6-11 a.m. Fish caught prior to 6 a.m. will not be considered.

Check in your catch at Dan Brouwer's dock, fifth cottage down the private lane from the swimming beach. A current Michigan fishing license is required and will be checked. Winning fish for adults will be based on weight, the 12 and under competition fish will be based on length.

All fish in the adult category must be Legal Game Fish! All participants will only be allowed one rod! (Example: Trolling with 3 rods per person gives an unfair advantage from those casting from boats or docks!)

We will check fish in the 12 and under category to see if any caught are eligible for a Michigan DNR Master Angler Award. If they are eligible we will provide the necessary documentation that is needed to receive a Master Angler award!

Looking forward to seeing all the avid Stony Lake fishers again this summer.

—Dan Brouwer



What's with the Newz?

We pay tribute with our "newzletter" name to Swift Lathers, above, who published the Mears Newz from 1914–1970. The "world's smallest newspaper" was printed in Mears, Michigan, but had subscribers nationwide. Copies are available at the Oceana Historical Park Museum Complex in Mears, which includes his home office.

Send comments about and information for the "Newzletter" to Julie Stivers, jlcstivers@gmail.com.

Newzletter production:

Julie Stivers, *editor*
 Sally Malnor, *Sparkler Section Coordinator*
 Emily Scheffler, *Minuscule Studio,*
Design & Production




2025 Winners

ADULTS (9 ENTRIES):

-  **Logan Bledsoe**
Brown Trout | 4.45lbs
- 2 Tom Oczarski (T.O.)**
Brown Trout | 4.00lbs
- 3 Matthew Courson**
Brown Trout | 3.95lbs

KIDS (11 ENTRIES):

-  **Dylan Getter**, age 2
Bowfin | 25.5in
- 2 Corbin Jonker**, age 10
Largemouth Bass | 15.25in
- 3 Hudson Sundell**, age 9
Largemouth Bass | 14.5in



2025 Boat Parade

The Speck Family took top honors this year with **Stonassic Lake**. Their mantel must be getting heavy with all the trophies they've taken home over the past several years.

The Detroit Lions were the theme for the **Johnson/Sosnowski Family's** second prize-winning entry.

The **Merkle Family** took us all on the Perfect Picnic, as well as taking home third prize honors. Watch out for those ants.

All boat photos by Jim Wildgen.



Join Your Neighbors for 4th of July Fun, Actually On the 4th this Year!



Photo by Nick Ferguson.

As far as we can tell from our less than complete records, the Stony Lake Association began sponsoring a Boat Parade on the weekend closest to the 4th of July sometime in the 1980s. For nearly 50 years, the neighbors of Stony Lake have come together on the weekend closest to the 4th of July to decorate boats, parade around the lake, and gather for an Ice Cream Social and award ceremonies.

Thanks to volunteers chaired by Jeff Larmore, Matt Ferguson and Sharon Zoller, the festivities continue this summer on **Saturday, July 4.**

Boats gather at Green Point in the middle of the Lake at 1:45 for a 2:00 start. All creative ideas are welcome and all boats receive a participation medal. Trophies go to the top three votegetters. Voting will again be via the internet – look for more details including the URL link, QR code etc. around the end of June on the SLPOA website and Facebook page.



Ice cream and cake will be served at the Camp Ao Wa Kiya waterfront at 4:00 p.m., and trophies awarded.

Parking is available at the camp – walk down the stairs to the waterfront. Or anchor your parade entry on the waterfront and wade in! (No docking available.) It's a good time to pay your Association dues, and maybe pick up a hat as well, so you might want to bring along some cash or a checkbook! It's a popular event, usually attracting over 200 people.

Independence Day weekend fun continues on **Sunday, July 5** with the **Stony Lake Sparkler & Lake Effect Artists' Summer Show.** More info on the next pages of this issue.

Congratulations to all the 2025 Boat Parade participants! You make our holiday festive at Stony Lake!





Stony Lake Association Annual Meeting

**Saturday, August 1
Benona Ballfield Park
9:00 a.m.**

Bring your own lawn chairs and join your neighbors, friends and visitors to hear the latest Association news about the summer's fun activities, as well as useful information on the health of the lake.



Second Lake Effect Summer Art Show July 4-5!

The Lake Effect Artists' Collective returns for its Annual Outdoor Summer Art Show on **Saturday, July 4 and Sunday, July 5, 2026**. Up to 50 juried booths — ceramics, painting, jewelry, sculpture, textiles, photography, and more — all original, all handmade. **Admission is free and open to all.**

The show falls the same weekend as the Stony Lake Sparkler 5K, just half a mile down the road at the Stony Lake Depot, creating a full Fourth of July celebration right here at home. Food trucks and vendors will be on the grounds, too!

Calling all artists: we're still accepting applications! Visit our facebook page for more details. Questions? Reach us at lakeeffectartistscollective@gmail.com.

— Emily Scheffler, Jan Jones, & The Lake Effect Artists' Collective



Poker Paddle is Back!



Matt Ferguson and his daughter-in-law Kelly in the first Stony Lake Poker Paddle, 2019.



Many thanks to volunteers **Merry Rosenberg** and **Nancy Mathews** for stepping up to bring back the popular Poker Paddle, lighthearted card-game fun while frolicking in boats on our beautiful lake. The Lake Association offered the event for four years, but the Board had to cancel last year because no one was able to take on the leadership.

By popular demand, and the gracious volunteer commitment from Merry and Nancy, it's back! On July 25, participants on person-powered boats can choose five docks from ten around the lake to

pick up cards for a five-card poker hand. Then gather at the Jonker beach on the west end, where they can turn in one card to improve their hand. Big round of applause to the Jonker family for hosting this fun event every year!

Plenty of prizes will be awarded, there's a treasure chest for kids and other activities at the Jonker beach celebration, which begins at 2:00 p.m.

More details will be published on our Facebook page and website closer to the date. Paddlers should look for flags to go up at 12:00 noon on participating docks around the lake, where they can pick up a map of all the dock locations and instructions. **Volunteers needed!** Contact Merry at rosenberg1478@yahoo.com.



Photo by Kristi Miedema.

A Summer's Day on Stony Means Sailing

From the days of Miniwanca's handbuilt Lark boats, to today's sleek Sunfish and speedy catamarans, sailing has been a favorite sport for both those on board and those on shore, appreciating the lovely sight of sails flapping in the breeze. Volunteer chairs Neal and Amy Miedema are the latest in a long line of committed sailors who organize weekend races.

This year's season begins on July 5 with the only Sunday race of the year (to avoid conflict with the Boat Parade on the 5th!).

Races are then planned on Saturdays, July 18; August 1, 15 & 29; and September 5.

Racers gather at the northwest end of the lake near the Miedemas' dock (clearly marked, 15th house east of the square dock at Benona beach). The first horn 5-minute warning sounds at 1:55, second, 2-minutes, at 1:58. Single sails take off at 2:00, Doubles at 2:02 and Catamarans at 2:04. Participants must obtain and return a signed waiver, email neal_miedema@hotmail.com for information.

THE STONY LAKE SPARKLER

Join the Fun! Sunday, July 5, 2026!

Thank you, Janie Denman, Sparkler race founder in 2015, and her successor, Kathy Sullivan, for creating and maintaining a fabulous family event! The incredible heat, humidity, and rain that arrived for the 2025 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk couldn't put a damper on the spirit of this festive affair.



The Wadel Family repeated their victory from last year for **largest family participation**, winning a humongous brownie from Woodland Bakery. Pictured here is just a youthful segment of the family.



Overall winners Jeffrey Weber from Traverse City, time 16:57.4 and Eliza Schwass from Scottville, time 18:40.4, took home art pieces depicting Michigan's lower peninsula, by Jan Jones.



Winners in the Masters Division were Lee Schwass, age 41, from Scottville, time 17:52, and Zuzana Tomas, age 48, from Ann Arbor, time 20:14.1. Their prizes were lovely platters from Claybanks Pottery.



Grand Masters Division winners Kevin Schaaf, age 50, from Grand Rapids, time 21:36.7, and Kay Schneider, age 58, from Westphalia, time 27:31, were awarded birdhouses from Stony Lake Custom Birdhouses.



Young race participants hold signs encouraging other racers along the route!

Our generous Sponsors deserve our thanks for their donations, which have helped many local families in need. See the sponsors on our website, stonylakesparkler.com, and make sure to thank them when you visit.

The dedication of volunteers makes the Sparkler a reality for friends and family to gather in a healthy July 4th week and morning activity. Join us! The Stony Lake Sparkler committee solicits sponsors, arranges media recognition, designs, orders, and delivers great T-shirts and awards. We prep the roads, organize a safe race, provide iconic hot dogs, chocolate milk, cookies, water, and last year we introduced fun tattoos for everyone to enjoy!

The 2027 Sparkler will be led by a wonderful new "Team Janie" Race Director, Lauri McKenna. Some longtime committee chairs will also be retiring, so we invite you to fill their places and build great friendships as well.

Visit our website to learn more about these key positions and how to become a valued team member throughout the year or on race day. And not to worry, the old guard won't be too far away to lend a hand with advice and a lot of assistance!



KEY INFORMATION FOR 2026

Mark your calendars!

All race details and online registration can be found at stonylakesparkler.com.

Friday, June 15: Register by midnight to be Guaranteed a T-Shirts and early bird discounted pricing.

Saturday, July 4 - 9-11 a.m.: Packets available and late registration (only if spaces remain available) at Stony Lake Inn, 4722 Scenic Drive.

Sunday, July 5: RACE DAY! Limited Free Parking is available on the ball field. If possible, please carpool, walk, or bicycle to the race. Packet pick-up from 7-8 a.m. at Stony Lake Inn. One-Mile Fun Run/Walk begins at 8:00 a.m. Sparkler 5K begins at 8:30.

Come join us for great fun, food, and prizes, and to celebrate the racers, volunteers, and this wonderful community. Our volunteers make this day what it is - to volunteer email us at StonyLakeSparkler@gmail.com. We need the help, and what a great way to make new friends around the lake!



\$30,628.76

And, the point of it all, a donation of **\$30,628.76** was made to Crystal Valley Care Fund. Pictured above are Stony Lake Association President Dale Burmeister; Deb Mitteer, Judy Kocx and Kathy Plaunt from CVCF; and Sally Malnor, Race Director.

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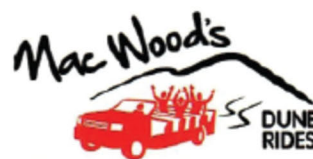
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Stony Creek in the News!



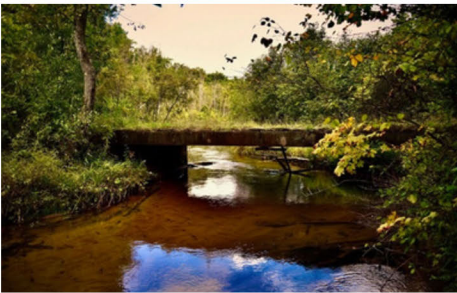
The Spring 2026 issue of Michigan Riparian magazine, published by the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association, features the restoration of upper Stony Creek as the cover story!

The article details the process that began as a county problem at the old Marshville dam site, and became a regional collaboration. “Stony Creek now runs free,” writes author Brian Majka, “and is now accessible to individuals of all abilities for fishing and enjoyment. The team successfully worked to create a project for the benefit of both the local ecology and the public.”

The project, completed last August, is covered in great detail in an eight-page article inside the issue. For information on membership in MLSA and access to the magazine, visit mymlsa.org.

Stony Creek Nature Preserve is Open

Students from the Oceana Conservation District's Forest School were hosts along the trail at the grand opening of the Stony Creek Nature Preserve last October.



The Preserve, located off 56th Ave. at Baker Rd., is open for hiking from dawn to dusk for foot traffic only. Some sections of the trail are steep and uneven. For details, visit www.oceanaconservation.org/stony-creek-nature-preserve.

Keeping Our Lake Healthy

The Lake Association sponsors two efforts to keep our eyes on the health and water quality of our little lake.

We have participated in the Cooperative Lakes Management Program (CLMP), a state program to collect data on Michigan's inland lakes, since 2004. This rich history of information enables scientists to evaluate the aging process of the lake and make informed decisions about the best way to treat it. For information about the data collected in the CLMP over the years, visit www.micorps.net and click through to individual lake reports.

The Lake Management Board was established in 2010, also to collect data and manage annual harvesting of plant overgrowth and control of invasive non-native water plants. The Management Plan developed for these activities must be renewed every five years. A Public Hearing to determine whether to continue the current plan will be held in August. E-mail notices will be sent and posted on the SLA website and Facebook page.

Minutes of the Management Board meetings are available from Dave Zoller, dzoller@hotmail.com, who also can answer any questions about treatment and harvesting.



To do something yourself to help maintain the good water quality we all enjoy around our lake, consider putting in some native plants on your waterfront.

The Oceana Conservation District Native Plant Sale is Friday, May 22 from 10-3 at the District's office, 1064 Industrial Park Drive in Shelby.

Muskegon Conservation District's sale is May 15, 10-1 at their office, 4735 Holton Rd.



New! Stony Lake Association Garden Tour!

The Stony Lake Association is sponsoring a new event this summer, a tour of gardens in full bloom around the area. The first Stony Lake Association Garden Tour is **Saturday, September 11, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

The tour is the brainchild of neighbor Jan Carr (better known as Suzie), whose gardening talents are well known by area plant lovers. She has been working on the idea since last summer and has already received commitments from several fellow green thumbs. There's still room on the tour, though, so she is encouraging anyone who wants to put their handiwork on display to contact her at zelda500@gmail.com.

The Garden Tour will be a self-driving affair. Suzie will put together a map with a suggested tour route from first garden to last. "This way people can drive in an organized way," she explained. "No doubling back!"

There is no admission for the Garden Tour, and the map will be posted at the Market, the Inn, the Depot and the Farmhouse Kitchen, and available at all stops on the tour. If you're proud of your lovely garden, showcasing the splendor of nature at Stony Lake, consider joining in. Or just be a spectator. Maybe you'll get inspired!



The Roar of the Motors, the Thrill of Vintage Charm

A group of outboard motor enthusiasts has been gathering annually for a few years at Stony Lake to share and enjoy their collection of vintage boat motors.

Last year they invited the public to join them at the Benona Twp. swimming beach for one of their meets, and this year they have scheduled two, on **June 27 and September 19, from 10:00-5:00 p.m.**

There will be a display area, a swap meet/flea market, and a "How Slow Can It Go" contest. Motors will be displayed on land and water, bring a stand if you want to show yours. Or bring a boat with an anchor to float nearby.

There is no launch near the beach, but helpers will be available to carry light boats from the parking area. The public launch across the lake is tricky, four-wheel drive suggested.

Host John Zapolski invites anyone interested in old motors to stop by. "Bring a folding chair (or two)," he said. "Pizza will be provided and there are other dining options nearby."

In Memorium

Within just a few days last May, we lost two larger-than-life Stony Lake legends, one a friend to everyone he met, and another who felt like a friend from his role on a favorite television show.



George Wendt, known as Norm Peterson to the millions who tuned in to the TV sitcom *Cheers*, died on May 20 last year, aged 76. In his early days as a performer with the renowned improv troupe Second City in Chicago, he met his wife, Bernadette Birkett, who had deep Stony Lake roots. They spent time over the years with their family at cottages on Stony and on Lake Michigan, and he was regularly spotted at area businesses and the Stony Lake bar. His brother-in-law, Ray Birkett, owns Stony Lake Cutlery.



Robert Bauer (Big Bad Beautiful Bob) died on May 26 at the age of 83, looking out over his beloved lake with his wife, Kathy Sullivan, at his side. He had a long career as a graphic artist, retiring to Stony Lake in 2000 as Art Director at Grand Valley State University. After retirement, Bob stretched his artistic gifts, creating paintings and sculpture that are part of many local collections. He was the keeper of the door at the Stony Lake Sparkler.



Detach this form and send with \$50.00 Dues to:

Ruth Fleming
2700 S. 64th Ave.
Shelby, MI 49455

Make checks payable to SLA.

Check here if this is a renewal membership and your information has **NOT** changed.

Name: _____

Newzletter mailing address: _____

Alternate address: _____

Phone #: _____ Alt. Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Check here if you'd like to volunteer for SLA



Thank You 2025 Volunteers!

FISHING TOURNAMENT: Dan Brouwer, *chair*; Matt Ferguson, Nick Ferguson

ICE CREAM SOCIAL: Sharon Zoller, *chair*; Libby Brouwer, Dale Burmeister, Penny Burmeister, Patti Mullen

SAILBOAT RACING: Neal & Amy Miedema, *chairs*; David Lattie, Carolyn Lehr

BOAT PARADE: Matt Ferguson, *chair*; Jeff & Sue Larmore, Jim Wildgen

MEMBERSHIP: Ruth Fleming

SPARKLER: Sally Malnor, *Race Director*; Kathy Bagge, Deana Fox, Chris Kok, Jeff Larmore, Jeffrey Meeuwsen, Suzy Polk, Steve Samson

COMMUNICATIONS: Maribeth Sala-Geitzen, *chair*; Matt Ferguson, *photographer*; Jim Wildgen, *photographer*; Julie Stivers, *Newzletter editor*; Emily Scheffler, *Minuscule Studio, Newzletter graphic design*

WATER QUALITY: Dave Zoller & Steve Lawwill, *Lake Management Board*; Matt Ferguson, Justin Mikkelsen, John Stivers, *CLMP monitoring*

Join Your Neighbors Today— Support the SLA!

The Stony Lake Association (SLA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, established as the Stony Lake Property Owners Association in 1955. We are dedicated to preserving Stony Lake, maintaining the health and welfare of the lake, and promoting a sense of community. Membership covers our annual Newzletter, social activities, and regular testing of lake water to monitor the condition of the lake.

Membership is open to all who have an interest in the well-being of Stony Lake. Annual dues are \$50, payable by check or credit card (link at stonylakepropertyowners.com). We are using Zeffy, a free fundraising platform for nonprofits, which accepts credit cards and e-checks.

Newzletters are mailed to members in early May and are mailed to your primary address, unless otherwise specified. Our Member Directory is on our website and is password protected. Email stonylakepropertyowners@gmail.com for password. Find us on Facebook, at stonylakepropertyowners.com, or check the Association Board next to the market.

Michigan Legislature Considers Bills of Interest to Stony Lakers

Senate Bill 0812 has been introduced in the Michigan Senate, offering protection for our shoreline and bottomlands. Currently in the Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture, the bill would regulate the speed and water depth for operation of a vessel on inland lakes. It is meant specifically to address problems generated by boats operating in wake sport mode, and includes language defining distances from shoreline, docks, bathing areas, and moored vessels.

Legislation also has been introduced to establish a statewide septic system code. Michigan is currently the only state in the country without a mandatory statewide sanitary code. Senate Bill 0771 would regulate onsite sewage and wastewater treatment systems and provide for assessments and evaluations. The bill also has been referred to the same committee. **For complete text of both bills, check www.legislature.mi.gov.**

STONY LAKE

ASSOCIATION
EST. 1955

1007 Roosevelt St.
Plymouth, MI 48170

Dates to Remember this Summer!



ANTIQUÉ OUTBOARD MOTOR SHOW

June 27 • 10am — 5pm
Benona Township Beach

July 4th



FISHING TOURNAMENT

6am — 11am



LAKE EFFECT OUTDOOR SUMMER ART SHOW

11am — 5pm
Stony Lake Depot North Field



BOAT PARADE

1:45pm
Gather at Green Point



ICE CREAM SOCIAL

4:00pm
*Camp Ao-Wa-Kiya
Gather at the Waterfront*

July 5th



STONY LAKE SPARKLER

8:00am • *Stony Lake Inn*



LAKE EFFECT OUTDOOR SUMMER ART SHOW

11:00am — 5:00pm
Stony Lake Depot North Field



SAILBOAT RACES

2pm



STONY LAKE GARDEN TOUR

July 11 • 10am — 2pm



SAILBOAT RACES

July 18 • 2pm



POKER PADDLE

July 25 • 12pm — 2pm



ANNUAL MEETING

August 1 • 9am
Benona Township Park



SAILBOAT RACES

August 1, 15, & 29 • 2pm



SAILBOAT RACES

September 5 • 2pm



ANTIQUÉ OUTBOARD MOTOR SHOW

Sept. 19 • 10am — 5pm
Benona Township Beach

Check our website, facebook page, and community board next to the store for updated information.

stonylakepropertyowners@gmail.com