

Summer
2026



Deer Lake Newsletter

Published three times a year by:
Deer Lake Property Owners' Association

Dedicated to the preservation and improvement of a beautiful lake for future generations

President's Message

George Lynn

As Spring turns into Summer at Deer Lake, it is always exciting to see our community come back to life. The longer days, warmer weather, returning boats, and familiar faces around the lake remind us why this community is such a special treasure and place to call home.

On behalf of the DLPOA Board, thank you to everyone who contributes their time, energy, and ideas to help keep Deer Lake welcoming, safe, and enjoyable for all. Whether you volunteer at events, help neighbors, participate in meetings, or simply take pride in your property, your continued involvement makes a difference. This historical season brings many opportunities to reconnect with friends and family; enjoying everything our lake community has to offer. As activity increases around the lake, we encourage everyone to continue practicing safe boating, respectfully using shared spaces, and consideration for neighbors. A little courtesy goes a long way in preserving the peaceful environment we all value.

The Board continues working on projects and priorities that support the short and long-term health of our community; including maintaining common areas, reviewing infrastructure needs, and planning for future improvements. We appreciate the feedback and participation from members as we continue these efforts together. We also want to recognize the strength of this community during difficult moments.



The recent loss of a dedicated and passionate DLPOA member, George Craig, reminded us how connected and supportive the Deer Lake community truly is. The kindness shown during that unexpected and difficult time was so appreciated and reflected the caring spirit of DLPOA.

As we move into another beautiful lake season, we hope everyone has the opportunity to relax, make memories, and enjoy time with those who matter most.

Please stay informed through Association updates, attend meetings when possible, and continue sharing ideas that help make our community even better. Wishing you all a safe and fun-filled time at Deer Lake.

Happy 250th Birthday to our great nation!

Schedule of 4th of July Events: More details inside on next two pages

July 3rd (Friday):

around 10 pm — Fireworks over the lake (When it gets really dark!)

July 4th (Saturday):

10:30 am Kids' Parade (for all ages), starts at Deer Lake Resort to Pinelow—Stay for the free Picnic in the Park sponsored by DLPOA after the parade in the big meadow

2 pm Boat Parade, starts at east side mouth of the Narrows, circles lake— counter clockwise

6 pm Ridler Piano Barge — Launches from Deer Lake Resort around 6 pm and heads south to Sunrise Point area, makes a U turn, then goes clockwise around the lake until they anchor at the Sandbar area near the Public Boat Launch) for a concert. It's pretty shallow in that area—please slow down and be cautious, you might have to raise your prop. You can request songs or send much-appreciated donations with Venmo. Their account is "@the-ridler".

July 5th (Sunday):

8 am—Noon Pancake Feed at Pinelow Dining Hall



The first event for the 4th of July weekend starts with a BANG!

Mike Egan 2

Fireworks display will be July 3rd, Friday night, around 10 pm (if the weather and cover of darkness comply). If you come by boat to watch the show, please stay at least 200 feet away from the barge.

Please donate as you can—we have a lot to be grateful for on this 250th birthday of our nation, so let's celebrate!

Enjoy the show, and have a great holiday weekend!

Kids' Street Parade—Saturday, July 4th at 10:30 am

Bobby Williams



The Fourth of July Children's Parade is right around the corner, and it's shaping up to be another great morning for the community. We'll kick things off at 10:30, so if you want to watch, plan to get there a little early, find your spot, and soak it all in. This is one of those traditions that just feels right every year. Families, kids, neighbors, everyone coming together to celebrate in a simple and fun way.

If you'd like to be IN the parade, one of the best parts of this parade is that just about anything goes! Walk the route, ride your bike, bring the motorcycle, golf cart, side by side, or in your car – the more variety, the better!

Decorations are a big piece of the fun. Red, white, and blue everything. Streamers, flags, signs, costumes. Go all out! And don't forget the candy to throw to spectators. The kids look forward to it every year, and let's be honest, the adults don't mind it either. We'll also have the Ridler band playing during the parade and also at the picnic, which always brings great energy and makes the parade and picnic more exciting!

Immediately following the parade, we'll be serving hot dogs and chips at Pinelow, so stick around, grab some food, and keep the celebration going. It's a great chance to catch up with people you haven't seen in a while and let the kids run around and keep the fun rolling.

One quick note for those not planning to attend, on the morning of the event, North Deer Lake Road will be closed starting at 10:00 am and will reopen at the end of the parade, which should be around 11:00 am. Please plan ahead and take alternate routes if you're heading through the area.

So, grab your family, invite some friends, and come be part of it. Whether you are a participant, or a spectator, we think you'll enjoy yourself. This is what summer is all about!

Boat Parade around the lake—Saturday, July 4th at 2 pm

Decorate your boat AND the people on it! You'll assemble on the East side of the lake at the bottom of the Narrows. Leader, Paul Ross, will have a big blue DLPOA flag on his pontoon boat.

The Parade will leave this area at 2 pm.

Follow the leader—travel counter-clockwise, stay behind the boat in front of you go around 5 mph, and only get as close to docks as is deemed safe.

If you want to stay dry, keep out of range of those fun-loving, hose spraying, squirt gun shooting, water balloon throwing folks who lie in wait for the boats to go by. If you **want** to take part in the traditional water fights, then you can come in closer, and probably will get wet.

Take care of your electronics on the boat! Have fun, be safe, and please clean up any debris from the lake (consider buying biodegradable water balloons).



Keep your boat decorated, and then after dinner (around 6 pm), get back in it to follow the Ridler Barge as they entertain us while cruising around the lake.

Then, set anchor, and let's PARTY at the Sandbar!



Pancake Feed

Mike Nixon

The 45th Annual Pancake Feed will be held on Sunday, July 5th from 8:00 a.m. until noon on the west side of the lake, at Pinelow Park. Many thanks go to the numerous volunteers who help feed 650 to 850 guests each year. We also give special thanks to Ron and Nicki Coil, who generously allow us to use their beautiful facilities at Pinelow each year.

Although the Pancake Feed was originally started to raise funds for the Fire Station, over the last 45 years it has turned into a must-attend event where Deer Lake residents not only enjoy pancakes and ham, but also get to reunite with many of their neighbors, purchase some new Deer Lake Apparel, or buy chances to win fabulous prizes via the raffle. You can also renew your DLPOA membership in person or join the Big Buck Club.

Admission will be **\$7.50 for adults and \$5.00 for children under age 12**. All proceeds go to the DLPOA General Fund to help pay for many of the important activities that we support. We do take cash or credit cards.

Most of our volunteers return every year, as this is a great way to serve our community, renew old friendships, and make new ones! We do still have a need for a few new volunteers.

Please contact Mike Nixon at 509-844-4439 if you are interested in joining this fun crew.



The DLPOA Annual Meeting

George Lynn

The Annual Meeting will be held on August 22nd at 10 am at the Deer Lake Fire Station. This is an important opportunity for members to hear updates on lake and association matters, ask questions, and participate in discussions about future priorities. There is usually a guest speaker and then a vote to ratify members to the Board.

One topic this year will be a discussion regarding DLPOA dues. The Board felt it was important for members to have input and vote on the matter rather than simply implementing a change. We encourage all homeowners, especially new members, to attend and learn more about DLPOA and the issues affecting our community. Refreshments, too!

Chipper Day

Skip Wells

We have two Chipper Days this year. The first one was on Saturday, May 30, 2026. Since it is past that date when you read this, we hope you saw it on your DLPOA calendar and were able to participate.

The Fall Chipper Day will be held on Saturday, October 3rd from 9 am until 3 pm.

We take: Clean stumps, brush, full trees, limbs and such. **No sawn wood whatsoever.**

The cost: \$10.00 for a pickup/trailer and \$20.00 for a large load. HUGE loads could be \$30

Location: Just north of Baldwin Lumber, on Agar Road—just off Hwy 395



Our partner is the Loon Lake Property Owners' Association, and is sponsored by the Stevens County Waste Management Department through a grant from the WA State Department of Natural Resources. The loader operator is provided by Stevens County.

We are way cheaper than going to the Transfer Station. We understand that they charge \$50.00 minimum for a load of the above materials.

Note: Not only will it be cheaper, but the funds raised by this project will go to worthy causes—authorized charities previously approved by the Deer Lake and Loon Lake Property Associations.

We are always looking for help unloading vehicles. Give an hour or two (or more!) if you can.

Just call Skip Wells at 509-979-3260 and we will get you scheduled.



Tribute to George Craig

Bob Schwartz

The Deer Lake Community and DLPOA lost one of its true pillars with the sudden passing of **George Craig** several weeks ago. George was the kind of man everyone hopes for but rarely finds — steady, selfless, and always the first to step forward when help was needed.

He gave endlessly of his time and energy, never asking for recognition and never hesitating to serve. Whether it was a project, a problem, or a person in need—George showed up. His character was solid, his generosity unmatched, and his commitment to others unwavering.

To his friends and family, he was a source of pride and strength. To our community, he was a cornerstone — someone we relied on without ever needing to ask. His absence leaves a space that cannot be filled, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him.



Emergency Services Report

Skip Wells

As the Fourth of July weekend gets closer, we are reminded that parking is coming at a premium. Those folks that have room to park along their road frontage are already putting up signs and roping off their sites for themselves, not for you or your friends and family to park there!



Please plan how and where your vehicles are going to park. Note both the Sheriffs' Office and the Fire District ask that you park vehicles and trailers **OFF** the roads for construction vehicles and emergency equipment that need to get through. It is recommended that vehicles be parked away from the edge of the road.

Consider a plan to shuttle people and supplies in and out of your place at the lake. Visitors may have to park some distance away in order to not infringe on the roadway. This courtesy will help accommodate and respect Deer Lake property owners and their access.

As always, boating has requirements which need to be followed. Counter Clockwise is the rule, and safety vests and throws need to be on board for each person.

Here is a special note: When helicopters and airplanes are on the water — **GET OFF THE LAKE, PERIOD!**

FOR FUN AND SAFETY ON DEER LAKE

THE LAW

1. No wake (5 mph) within 100' of other craft, shoreline, docks and buoys.
2. Approved life vests required for all PWC & children under 12 years of age in boats.
3. Do not operate any boat or PWC under the influence of alcohol.
4. Use running lights & observe no wake (5 mph) after dark (1/3 hour after sunset).
5. 3 person PWC's required for waterskiing.
6. Anyone 12 years of age or older is required to pass an approved boating safety course exam and receive a Washington State Boater Education Card before operating a boat 15hp or greater.
7. No person under 14 years of age may operate a PWC.
8. Pass all other craft on the right.

LAKE COURTESY

1. While running and skiing observe counter clockwise direction within 400' of shore
2. While zooming & playing on PWC, please say out of bays and narrows.
3. Please inform any person operating boat or PWC of safety and operating procedures.
4. Do not disturb wildlife on the lake.
5. When approaching shore, be extremely careful of swimmer, divers and other craft.
6. Please offer assistance to stranded vessels.

**HAVE FUN AND RESPECT THE RIGHTS & SAFETY
OF OTHERS AROUND YOU ON THE WATER AND
ADJACENT LAND!!**

Remember to join our two social media sites, if you haven't done so already. It's a great way to stay in touch with events happening at the lake, such as items for sale, lost and found postings, and alerts. To join Nextdoor, send an email to Bob Schwartz at rismt@hotmail.com, and he will mail you an invitation link to submit to Nextdoor directly. (You must own property here).

We also have a Deer Lake Property Owners Facebook page, send a "friend" request and, you too, could be one of our over 2,000 members. This is also the place where more photos are posted showing the good times that are had at the lake, as well as news that is passed along to members.

On Saturday, May 9th, we had our Spring Roadside Cleanup Day. We had great participation and a fairly light amount of garbage. The West side had 120 pounds of trash and the East side had 200 pounds. As usual, everyone met afterwards at the Fire Station for hot dogs, chili, and of course, visiting with all our great lake neighbors. We would like to thank everyone that participated as it certainly made for an easy day.



We appreciate our volunteers who pick up the trash and are teaching their children to follow their good example!

Mark and Julie Nevdahl, Greg and Karen Presley, Lance Corbin, George Lynn Senior and Junior, Bill Ryan, Jessica and Owen Magnuson, Andy and Bernadette Hamilton, Alexis and Addie Culnane, Janeen VanSlyke, Kevin and Joe Schroeder, Jerry Rasley, Dave Greco, Steve Jones, Bob Schwartz, Rory and April Tweedy, Scott, Christy, and Amanda Overbust, Mike Nixon, Phil and Jill Bray, Wayne and Debbie Kenny, and Jenn, Jordan, and Taylor Campbell

Dock Demolition Update

A Dock Demolition Day will be planned for Spring 2027. There is a need for a new Committee Chairman to organize the event, as the previous chairman, Phil Bray, is now occupied as the Treasurer for DLPOA.



Phil is willing to assist and advise as needed. This event is very important to the lake, and is always well supported by volunteers. If you are interested in heading up this vital committee, please contact a DLPOA officer.

Deer Lake Apparel
 In addition to the Pancake Feed on July 5th, apparel will be sold at:
Joan's Gift Shop
 Inside the Historical Loon Lake Schoolhouse
 Open Saturdays, 10am - 4pm thru September

T-Shirts - \$20.00
Hooded Sweatshirts - \$40.00

Contact DLPOAapparel@gmail.com to volunteer with apparel sales or if you have any questions.

Check, cash, venmo, credit/debit accepted.
 All sizes and colors were available by pre-ordering in May. Available while supplies last.

Membership to DLPOA

Bill Haney



There's something special about a calm day on Deer Lake. Looking across the water, it's easy to understand why generations of families have chosen to spend their summers, holidays, and weekends here. Moments like these remind us that DLPOA is about more than meetings or dues. It's about preserving the experience, traditions, and sense of community that make this lake such an important part of our lives.

DLPOA membership continues to directly support the things that matter most to our community: lake stewardship, safety initiatives, community events, fireworks, fish rearing, roadside cleanup, communications, and advocacy for property owners. Every DLPOA membership and every donation helps keep those efforts moving forward.

We also know that life gets busy, and sometimes memberships simply get overlooked. If you have not yet renewed, we encourage you to do so. Membership is tied to the property and remains one of the simplest and most meaningful ways to support the lake and community we all enjoy. Annual membership is \$20—you can mail in the enclosed envelope, or go directly to dlpoa.com to submit your dues online.

If you have neighbors, family members, or new property owners who may not be connected with DLPOA yet, please encourage them to get involved. Strong communities are built through participation, and every additional member strengthens the organization's ability to serve the lake for years to come.



Thank you to everyone who continues to support DLPOA through memberships, volunteering, donations, and participation. Your involvement truly makes a difference.

Check out the new and improved DLPOA Website

Tim Erlandsen



We have made some changes to our website dlpoa.com from the ground up — we still have the same address, but it's been redesigned with some new added features we think you'll like.

Everything DLPOA does now resides in one place: there are links to news and lake updates, the DLPOA Activities calendar and most current DLPOA newsletter in PDF form, the Apparel store, and secure online payments for dues and donations for the first time.

What you can do right away:

- ◆ Pay your 2026 dues in about two minutes. \$20 per household, paid securely on a Stripe-hosted checkout page (your card information never touches our server). You can optionally tick a box to cover the small processing fee so DLPOA receives the full \$20.
- ◆ Prefer to mail a check? That hasn't changed — see the Membership & Dues page for the mailing address.
- ◆ Donate to the 4th of July Fireworks Fund or the General Fund, in any amount, from the same secure checkout.
- ◆ Browse and order DLPOA apparel — hats, hoodies, the new SPF-50 sun shirts, the "HOME Deer Lake, WA" short and long sleeved shirts— with photos you can hover over for a closer look.
- ◆ Read the newsletter and the 2026 activities calendar right in your browser, no downloads required. The history of DLPOA and the milfoil report can be found there, too.

If you go into the DLPOA calendar, there is a "Show historical lake events" checkbox above the calendar layers. All the previously recorded interesting events from years of past DLPOA calendars will then be shown. Find the day each year of the first-freeze, or when the ice left the lake, big snowfalls, heat waves, the 2015 windstorm, the long Christmas power outage in 2016. A handy way to see how Deer Lake has changed (or hasn't) over the years.

Take a look at dlpoa.com. Email me at webmaster@dlpoa.com if you have any questions, ideas, or problems.



Tips for Selling Your Home at Deer Lake

Aaron Farr

Waterfront homes show differently throughout the year, and Deer Lake is no exception. Summer highlights docks, swimming, and outdoor living. Fall often brings clearer sightlines, more privacy, and beautiful views. Winter can limit access and visual appeal, but it often attracts serious buyers who are ready to make decisions. Spring can bring fluctuating water levels and runoff. Timing and preparation should match how your property presents in each season.

Shoreline and lake access matter more than many people realize. Buyers pay close attention to shoreline type, water depth, dock usability, and how easy it is to get in and out of the water. A gradual entry, swimmable depth, or a protected dock location can significantly impact value and buyer demand. These details should be understood and represented accurately.

Waterfront homes also come with extra systems and paperwork. Wells, septic systems, docks, and shoreline rules often require documentation. Buyers expect transparency, and having records organized ahead of time can prevent delays during inspections and negotiations.

Maintenance is under a microscope. Water, sun, snow, and wind accelerate wear. Buyers look closely at roofs, siding, decks, docks, drainage, and any signs of moisture. Proactive maintenance protects value and builds confidence.

Finally, waterfront buyers tend to think long term. The best results come from pricing and preparing to attract the right buyer, not just creating activity.

Quick Deer Lake Prep Checklist:

- ◆ Septic pumped and service records ready
- ◆ Well test results available
- ◆ Dock condition and hardware checked
- ◆ Drainage moving water away from the home
- ◆ Exterior touch ups, especially decks and rails
- ◆ Photos taken when the property shows best



Business and Residential Notice of Herbicide Treatment

Date: Summer/Fall 2026

Water body name: DEER LAKE WASHINGTON

Eurasian water milfoil will be treated with aquatic herbicides on/or between July-October 2026

Products planned for use: Clipper Active ingredients: Flumioxazin 51%, Diquat 37.3%

Location of Treatment(s): The Narrows North and East Side, other areas, as needed

Treated and potentially affected areas will be sign posted the day of application. The signs will describe any water use restrictions or advisories.

If you are withdrawing water for potable or domestic water use, livestock watering, or irrigation, and have no alternate water source, please contact the applicator: KEVIN SCHROEDER at (509) 999-7712 to arrange an alternate water supply.

If you would like to request additional notification prior to treatment, or further questions, please contact me using the information above.



I am **Mike Phillips**, head of the Deer Lake Management District Steering Committee and I also implement the water quality testing periodically.



Mike wears many hats!

Having spent 20 years working to keep Eurasian Milfoil from taking over Deer Lake, but I am now passing the leadership torch to several capable residents of Deer Lake. They have been working with me for many years to control the spread of the invasive weed, Eurasian Milfoil.

I am also the head of the Deer Lake Management Steering Committee and Kevin Schroeder is taking over for me at the end of 2026. He has been doing the milfoil treatment since the very beginning. The rest of the committee consists of: Skip Wells, Jerry Rasley, Ken Ring, Mark Turney, Greg Presley, Bill Haney, and Ken Santora. Six of these men are also DLPOA Board members.

I have been the lead person doing water quality testing since 1993. Mark Turney is taking over this position. He is our “Deer Lake Diver”, so he is well acquainted with what’s going on under the surface of Deer Lake. He is well-versed in the scientific knowledge needed to do this work.

To make these transitions go smoothly, I will stay involved and available whenever they may have any questions. I appreciate all the volunteer help and the support of DLPOA over the years. The DLPOA Board and the Deer Lake community has supported these efforts faithfully, and I hope that will continue to be true!



Review of the 2025 Eurasian Milfoil control effort

Mike Phillips

In 2025, we spent 3 weeks surveying, pulling, and treating milfoil. Ace Diving does the surveying and pulling as well as working with the treatment person. Deer Lake resident, Mark Turney, also known as the “Deer Lake Diver” reports any plants that look like they might be an invasive species. Along with milfoil, other invasive plants exist in lakes around us, so the divers keep a watchful eye for them. If we catch them early enough, we may be able to keep them from spreading around our lake.

The divers covered the shoreline to survey and pull just before the Fourth of July. They checked out those areas previously treated last year, to make sure nothing escaped the treatment. Just after the Fourth of July, the treatment person treated those patches that the divers found that were larger than ones than they could efficiently pull up.

In September, the divers spent two weeks doing a more thorough search, taking the time to look under docks and boats. They also checked out the treated areas to make sure the plants were killed from the July treatment.



At Deer Lake, our team is keeping Eurasian Milfoil under control, just as we have for the last 16 years. We did so within the budget that was set up under the Deer Lake Management District. If you’re not familiar with what that is—please read about it on the next page.

Please read this late-breaking information:

Deer Lake Property Owners recently got a letter from Stevens County that had some errors in it, and was written in a way that was very alarming to many people—right at the very beginning of the letter is a big number — making it seem like EACH property owner was going to be taxed \$36,500 per year for the next 5 years! Of course, that’s not true—a yes vote for the LMD will only mean either a \$3 or \$5 increase in the assessment you have already been paying the last five years, depending if you own a frontage or secondary lot.

(if you are going back to look at your letter, it is explained in (d) on the first page, and under (4) on the second page.

Also, in the very first sentence, it had the year that our LMD would expire wrong—they said 2025, but it is 2026. Our current LMD is funded through 2026, and if it is passes, it would go into effect in 2027. More info on next page.

What is a Lake Management District?

A Lake Management District (LMD) is a localized special-purpose district created by a county or city government to protect, improve, and maintain the health of a specific lake. It is primarily funded through special property tax assessments levied on property owners who directly benefit from the lake.

Why Are They Formed?

LMDs are typically established when lakeside or nearby property owners petition their local government to address specific environmental or recreational problems. They exist to fund and implement improvement plans that standard city or county budgets cannot support on their own.

How Are They Managed and Funded?

Funding: Fees or special assessments are collected alongside annual property taxes. The amount a property pays is generally based on how close the property is to the water and how much it benefits from the lake's health.

Governance: An LMD is overseen by the local county or city government, but it typically operates with a citizen advisory committee made up of local lake residents, that helps draft annual work plans and manages the budget.

What Do They Do?

An LMD uses its collected funds to operate several LMD vital lake management activities, including:

Aquatic Weed Control: Managing or eradicating invasive plant species that hinder boating, swimming, and environmental health (e.g., Eurasian watermilfoil).

Water Quality Improvement: Monitoring water health, reducing nutrient pollution, and preventing algae blooms.



Lake Management District – Eurasian Milfoil Control Program Vote Coming in August 2026

Mike Phillips

We are reaching the end of our current 5-year term (2022–2026) and will be voting this August to renew the Lake Management District for another 5 years (2027–2031). A **YES** vote will help us continue to fight milfoil in the lake.

Due to inflation, the Lake Management Board has recommended a modest 10% increase in the annual assessment to maintain our successful milfoil control

program. This equates to an approximate yearly increase of \$3 for secondary lots (from \$22 to \$25) and \$6 for waterfront lots (from \$45 to \$51). The county will calculate the exact amounts prior to the vote.

For the past five years we (as the entire community of Deer Lake Property Owners) have spent approximately \$33,000 per year on treatment. The new yearly budget of \$36,500 will allow us to continue the same effective level of control.

Over the last 16 years, Deer Lake residents—working together with ACE Diving, the LMD Board, and our professional treatment applicator—have successfully kept Eurasian milfoil in check. While it is impossible to completely eradicate this invasive weed, consistent management has prevented it from taking over the lake.

For new residents: Eurasian milfoil is a fast-spreading invasive aquatic plant that can quickly form dense mats across the lakebed. If left uncontrolled, it will choke shorelines, making swimming, boating, and fishing difficult or impossible and significantly reducing property values. A simple online search for “Eurasian milfoil” will show exactly why our ongoing program is so important.

Your continued support keeps our lake clean, usable, and valuable for everyone. Please vote **YES** in August to renew the Lake Management District and protect Deer Lake for the next five years. Thank you for your commitment to our community!

Questions? Contact any Lake Management District Board member:

- Skip Wells** (skipwells2@gmail.com) **Greg Presley** (grkapres@mmsn.com) **Bill Haney** (bill@haneyclan.com)
- Jerry Rasley** (jrasley@comcast.net) **Ken Santora** (traveler-007@hotmail.com) **Ken Ring** (kenringdeerlake@gmail.com)



Fishery Report for 2026 Kevin Santora

If you have been out on the lake recently, you already know something special is happening at Deer Lake. Bigger fish, more consistent catches, and a renewed excitement around the fishery are all signs that our collective efforts are paying off.



The 2025–2026 fish pen rearing season was a tremendous success. With the three net pens in operation, we raised approximately 30,000 Rainbow Trout and 15,000 Eastern Brook Trout to near-catchable size! This would not have been possible without the many volunteers and families who dedicated countless hours to support and improve our fishery. Your time, effort, and continued commitment are what make this program successful, and it truly shows in the results we are seeing today.



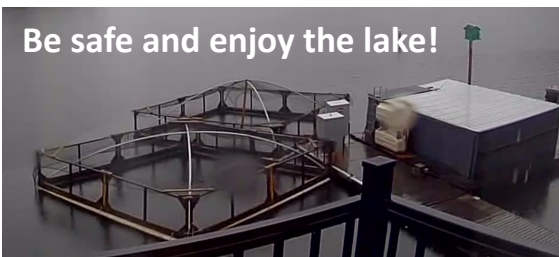
We have already received numerous reports of anglers catching Rainbow and Eastern Brook Trout in the 3 to 5 pound range. These results are impressive and reflect both the success of the rearing program and the strong natural food base in Deer Lake. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife continues to support the lake through stocking efforts. In addition to multiple releases of trout fry and fingerlings over the past year, WDFW also supplemented the fishery with a smaller number of larger broodstock trout.



The future of our fishery continues to look very promising.

If you would like to share photos of your catches, please send them in for possible inclusion in future newsletters. Photos help document the success of the program and encourage continued support from the community. Please include the angler's name along with the species, size and weight of the fish when submitting photos.

You can contact me at: Kevin Santora deerlake.fisheries.photos@gmail.com



Setting up, moving, maintaining, and cleaning the fish pens is a multi-age Santora family affair!

Big Buck Club

Ken Ring



In each and every edition of the newsletter, you are shown examples of all the things that DLPOA's volunteer organization does for you. The fish that are raised, all the 4th of July events, the DLPOA calendar and newsletters, etc. all need capital to exist.

Several years ago, we started the Big Buck Club to thank the homeowners that recognized the costs of what we do and were able to help us by donating at least \$100 (including the \$20 annual dues).

This generosity each year helps us fund all the "extras" that a lot of lake associations don't even dream of doing for their residents.

We have 116 members so far this year. Thank you—we appreciate your support!

Also — If you have any new neighbors move in near you, please let them know about DLPOA, so they can submit their address to us to receive all the information shared in the newsletters. Hopefully, then they will want to join DLPOA too!

Remembering our Beloved Tame Neighborhood Deer

Marie Kukula

I was winding down for the day around 8:30 pm on Wednesday, March 18th, scrolling through my Facebook feed, when I saw a post on the Loon Lake Community page with a picture of a deer that had been hit and killed by a car on North Deer Lake Road. My heart broke. I knew immediately from the orange tags in its ears, one with the number nine and the other the number ten, that this was Deer Lake's beloved tame deer, whom I've known and loved since she started visiting my property over a decade ago.



I called her Rudy, the same name given to her by a friend and former Deer Lake resident who, as a child, had raised an orphaned fawn he named Rudy. This man, an avid hunter, fell in love with this new Rudy, and he would pet her, hand-feed her, look forward to her daily visits, and worry about her when she didn't show up. Because of this experience, my friend gave up hunting deer.



My neighbor gave Rudy this name before the two orange tags were placed in her ears as part of a wildlife study, which made her easy to spot. For this article, I will call this deer Rudy, even though others called her different names. In the stories below, from other people who loved her, I will use the names they gave her.

Since Rudy's passing, I've learned through the many comments and pictures on the Facebook post about her, that, although we called her by different names, including Taggy, Fearless, Sarah, Sweets, Two Tags, and Nine, we all loved her dearly and got great joy out of having her in our neighborhood, watching her live her life and be a great mom to her beautiful fawns, usually twins, that she would have every Spring, and witnessing her just being her adorable, funny self. Rumor has it that Rudy was tame because she was orphaned shortly after birth and was taken in by a neighbor who bottle-fed her in his home. At around two to three years old, Taggy was captured as part of a wildlife study involving wolves in the area. Afterward, she returned with a tracking collar and tags on her ears, identifying her as Tag 9, later becoming also Tag 10.

On the night of the 18th, as word spread in a community group on Facebook about Rudy's passing, people began to share their stories and their love for her and the heartbreak they felt. It became clear she was not just any deer, but one who deserved to be remembered, grieved, and honored with a proper burial in our neighborhood, where she spent her entire life.



Through the comments, we learned more details about when and where Rudy was hit. Merrick White shared "I was on my way home, around 5:15 p.m. when I turned onto North Deer Lake Road and noticed a car going unusually slow. I immediately thought there must be deer nearby." As she approached the Nazarene Church, she noticed a deer lying on the ground and another deer that she recognized trying to wake her by nudging her face with her nose. Merrick pulled over as quickly as she could at the church and ran toward the deer, and as she got closer, she saw it was "Taggy" on the ground.

She said, "My heart just stopped. I couldn't believe what I was seeing." She saw Taggy's deer family was gathered in the bushes nearby as she tried to wake Taggy up, feeling that her body was still warm from being recently hit by a car. When Merrick realized that Taggy was gone, she completely broke down. "I sat there crying, petting her, trying to make sense of it, how and why it happened to a deer that was so known and loved," she shared.

Merrick called her mom, who then contacted Merrick's cousin, and they moved Taggy's body to her property because she didn't want to leave her by the road. Taggy's family followed them and surrounded her body, on the ground, staying with her all night. Later that evening, Merrick went on Facebook and saw the post about a deer with orange tags in its ears that had been hit. As she read through the comments and looked at the pictures of Taggy that people had shared, she realized how loved



Taggy was by our community. Merrick said, "It meant everything to see how deeply she was loved by so many."

The next day, Merrick began digging a grave with a shovel and invited her neighbor, Barbara Valencia, and her family to help her. Barbara shared that just after moving to Deer Lake in late September 2018, her son Gabriel, who was 9, was riding his bike and noticed a deer looking at him. He got off his bike, started walking towards her, and the deer gently approached him. Her son came inside and told them how this deer outside is "so brave and fearless." Because of this experience, the Valencias named this deer Fearless. Barbara said their entire family developed a friendship with Fearless that quickly grew into love over the next 7-1/2 years.



Barbara said that Fearless would run through the woods and right up to you when she'd hear her name being called, and she would bring her babies to visit every year to show them off. "Fearless would peek into our basement windows to see what we might have for her, too," Barbara said, "So I lovingly called her the Neighborhood Mooch."

When the Valencia's oldest, Ava, was 17, Fearless stood with her for twenty minutes while she sang and gave her scratches. Their 12-year-old daughter Eden's sweetest memories of Fearless is when she was going down their back porch stairs with a tomato, and Fearless walked up about five steps to get to it. "We loved showing her off to any friends or family who came to visit, and every one of them became a friend and fan of our beloved Fearless," Barbara added.

Together, Merrick, Barbara, and Barbara's husband Mauricio, and Eden, dug about a foot and a half down before Chaz Ridler saw Merrick's post on Facebook asking for community members to help her bury Taggy. Chaz immediately contacted her and offered to dig the grave with his excavator.

I also saw Merrick's post on Facebook and wanted to say goodbye to the beloved deer I called Rudy, whom I'd known and loved for 11 years, and be present for her burial. So I walked the half block down to Merrick's house at 1:00 pm and met her, Barbara, Mauricio, and Eden, where Rudy's body had been placed the night before in a small group of trees.

Chaz arrived a few minutes later with his excavator and quickly dug a hole wide enough for Rudy's body and deep enough to keep animals from digging her up.

I broke down and started crying as I said goodbye to Rudy, and Eden came up and hugged me, trying to comfort me even though her 12-year-old heart was breaking too. Eden made cookies shaped like Rudy's face from oats, carrots, and blueberries; she wanted one of the cookies to be buried with Rudy and the remaining cookies given to Rudy's family.



Chaz and Mauricio lovingly placed Rudy in her final resting place, then each of us placed a red rose and baby's breath on Rudy's body. It was a moment filled with love, respect, and support for an animal that meant so much to all of us. Chaz then used his excavator to fill in Rudy's grave with dirt, and we all sprinkled wildflower seeds over it.



Merrick had seen Taggy every day since she moved here, and said, "Taggy wasn't just any deer; she was a very special deer who was deeply loved by our community because of her gentle, sweet, and human-like presence."

Taggy was known for eating out of your hand, joining you on walks, and letting you brush her. Sometimes she would even groom you like one of her own; you couldn't wear shorts around her without her trying to "clean" you.

"She wasn't just a deer; she was family," Merrick added. Because of this, Merrick plans to make Taggy's burial site beautiful, planting flowers and an apple tree, creating a place as special as Taggy was, and so our community has a place to visit her.

Merrick said, "Taggy's death is going to make a difference. Through her, we hope to create change and protect the lives around us." In Rudy/Taggy/Fearless' honor, Merrick, Marie, Barbara, Mauricio, and other neighbors are going to work to raise awareness about speeding in the area and to get the speed limit lowered on North Deer Lake Road, where Taggy was hit, making that area safe for all humans and wildlife.



Submitted by the combined efforts of Marie Kukula, Merrick White, and Barbara Valencia