

# The Lake Riley Launch

March 2011

*An email newsletter for  
Lake Riley Improvement Association Members*

**Lake Dates.** The excitement is building! People are all abuzz! It's the talk of the town!

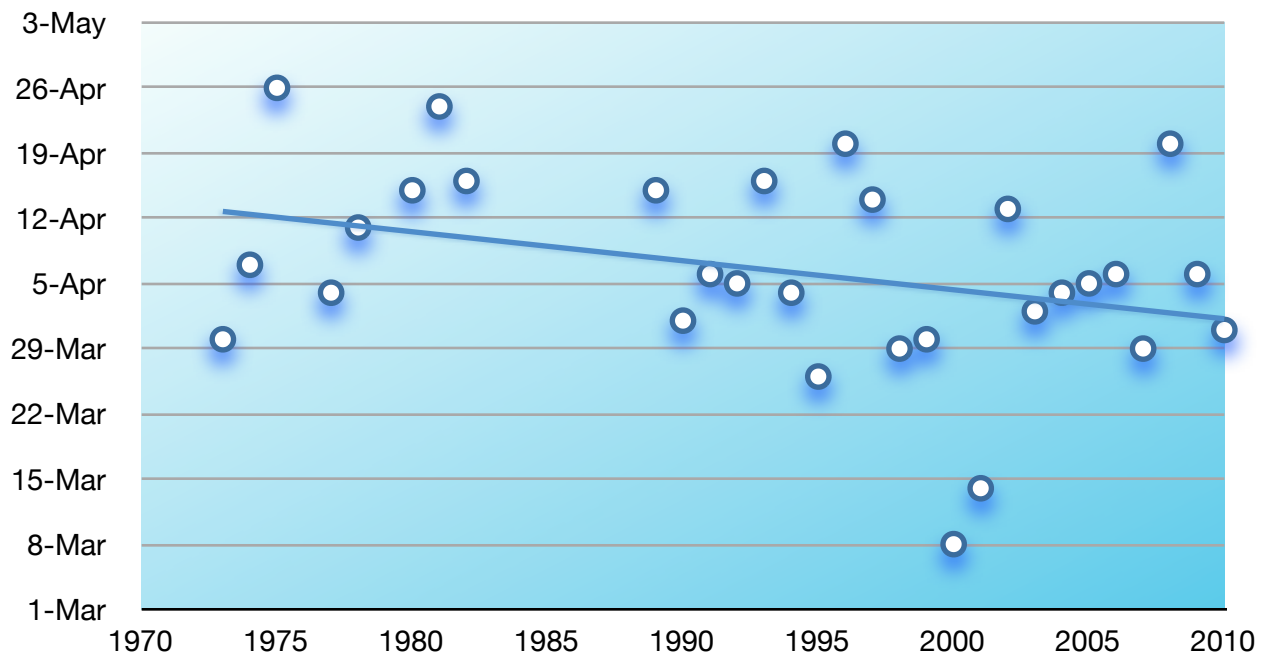
**Put it on your calendar - the annual Lake Riley Improvement Association meeting is coming up!**

It will be held on **Monday, April 18, from 7-9 p.m. in Heritage Room II at the Eden Prairie City Center.** Another reminder will be sent out shortly before the meeting. It's a great time to find out which faces belong to the houses you see around the lake, to shake hands with the neighbors you haven't seen all winter, and it always feels like the kickoff to the summer season. Come! And if there are any issues you would like to have discussed at the meeting, contact president John Bushey at [jabushey@mac.com](mailto:jabushey@mac.com) or 952-270-9206.

**Seeking New LRIA Board Members.** With the annual meeting approaching, this is the time for you to think about **how you can help the LRIA.** Our organization will maintain its vitality only through the infusion of energy from fresh faces and new ideas. John Bushey has served as President for more than 3 years already. We need new board members to help him out! Please consider becoming the new vice-president. It does not require many hours of commitment. Contact John to learn more about what being a board member involves - at [jabushey@mac.com](mailto:jabushey@mac.com) or 952-270-9206.

**Lake Ice.** Last year the ice went out on March 30th, which falls on the trend line. With nearly 40 years of data we can see slow movement to earlier ice-out dates. According to the trend lines for both ice-in and ice-out dates, in the 70's we averaged 140 days of ice each winter whereas we currently average about 115 days. Any guesses when the ice will go this year? Here are the approximate ice-out dates for Lake Riley since 1973:

**Lake Riley Iceout Dates**



**What a Load of Crappies.** Our intrepid ice-fishermen Dennis Mills and Bill O'Neill report that although the safe ice was late in coming this year due to heavy snow early on, this winter saw the best crappie fishing in three years. "This was a delight, as the last 2 years were very slow, when ice fishermen were forced to drink beer to stave off the boredom." Some fisherman made comments about the noticeable absence of weeds. Many northerns were also caught and some very large ones were speared. In another development, Dennis and Bill checked with several fishermen about their luck catching walleye, but all reports were poor. "Neil Klingelutz caught a keeper in our area and then on February 12th, a group of fishermen that came out for an outdoor party did catch a nice walleye. Other than that, nothing." Are the walleyes hiding? Have the northerns eaten all of them? "Or are we bad fishermen?" they wonder. Oh, don't be so hard on yourselves, fellows. The walleyes are just smarter than you; they live in *schools*. Ba-da-BOOM. Bill says, "Stop by anytime you are out wandering around the ice. Dennis tells good stories." Ice houses must be off the lake each night after March 7.

**Watershed Plan Approved.** Perry Forster, board president, wants everyone to know that the Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District's new management plan has been approved unanimously. "Please spread the word and thanks for all your help." Thank you, Perry.

**Carp Study.** On January 13th Channel 5 Eyewitness News ran a nice news story about the carp harvest in Lake Lucy, [Harvesting Carp at Chanhassen Lake](#). Check it out to see the members of the Carp study team talk about the project.

**Lost: A Cherished Ski.** From LRIA member Todd Porter: "Last summer, say mid July, our son and his friends lost a slalom water ski. Not a new ski but valuable to my wife since she had it as a kid. Wood laminated ski with the brand "Sovereign" on it. Kind of a heavy old school type with a slight concave bottom. Boot is black with a green strap. Lost somewhere along the area on the south west side of the lake. If you have found it or if you see it on the shore this spring, please let me know and I will pick it up. Thanks for your help." You can reach Todd at 612-840-1381 or 952-445-8087.

**Going Loony This Winter?** The official start of spring is on March 20, but spring warmth, sparkling lake water and green trees seem impossibly far away. Close your eyes for a moment and think about the sounds that mean "winter is over!" to you. Is it the sound of dogs barking in the neighborhood? Children's voices floating over the lake? Robins chirping, or leaves rustling? Here on Lake Riley we are lucky to have a very special spring sound that comes fast on the heels of the ice going out: the call of the loon. From the [MN DNR Common Loon](#) web page: "*Minnesota's state bird, the common loon, is more at home in the water than on land. Built like a torpedo, it swims under water in search of prey. Minnesota has more common loons than any other state except Alaska.*" The common loon has four calls, and there is an excellent article from the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer titled "[Hoot, Tremolo, Yodel and Wail](#)" where you can learn about the calls. A third excellent resource for tracking loons (and many other birds and seasonal patterns) is at [Journey North](#). "*Journey North engages students in a global study of wildlife migration and seasonal change. K-12 students share their own field observations with classmates across North America. They track the coming of spring through the migration patterns of monarch butterflies, robins, hummingbirds, whooping cranes, gray whales, bald eagles— and other birds and mammals;... Widely considered a best-practices model for education, Journey North is the nation's premiere "citizen*



*science" project for children. The general public is welcome to participate.*" You can post and track your own loon sightings!

**Here are some fun facts about loons from the MN DNR:**

--The bones of most birds are hollow and light, but loons have solid bones.

--The extra weight helps them dive as deep as 250 feet to search for food. They can stay underwater for up to five minutes.

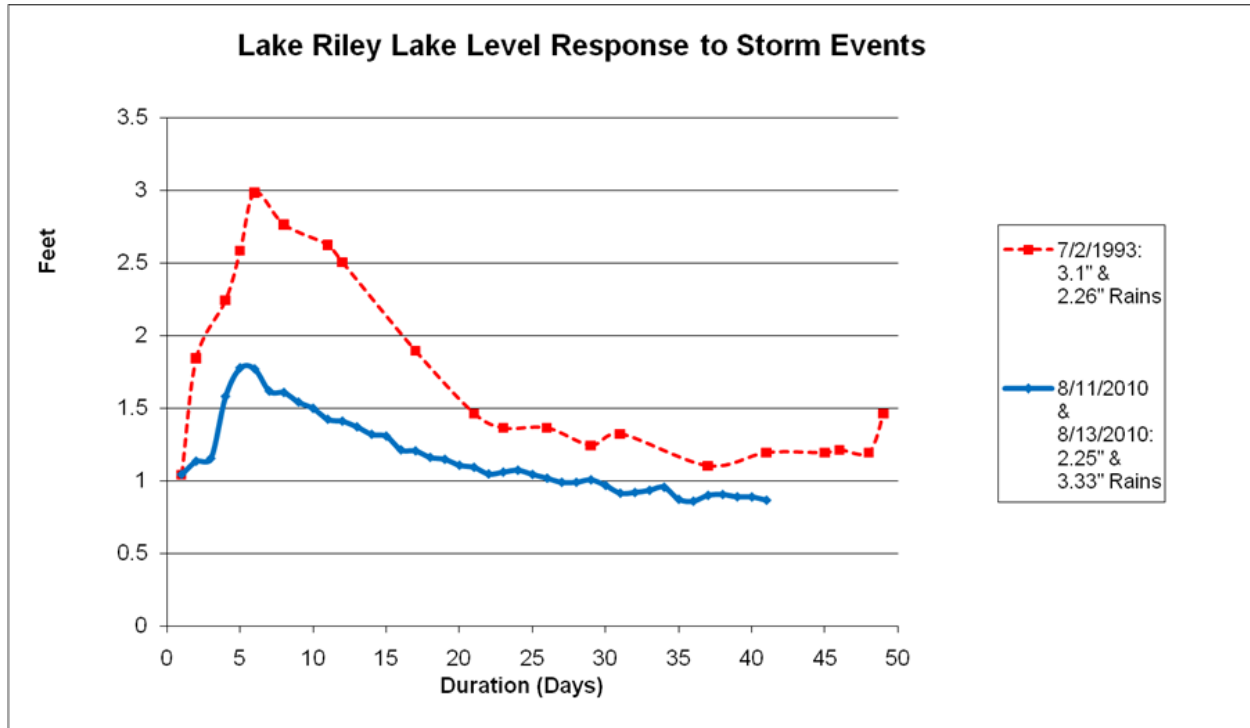
--Because their bodies are heavy relative to their wing size, loons need a 100- to 600-foot "runway" in order to take off from a lake.

--Loons can fly more than 75 miles per hour.

--The red in the loon's eye helps it to see under water.

--Scientists think loons can live for 30 years or more

**New Culvert Doing Its Job.** This update on the Riley Culvert from John Glatzmaier of CH2M HILL: "We looked at the 2010 Lake Riley elevation data, and compared the Aug 11 and 13, 2010 rain events to a similar 2 day event in early July, 1993. The chart below shows the difference in bounce: 2.5 times less. The difference in duration (above a 6" bounce): 3 times less. We inspected the site several times during the spring and early summer to ensure the slope stabilization plantings above the culvert at Lakeland Terrace were taking root. No problems observed. Please let me know if there are any issues with the culvert, thanks!" The larger culvert has helped a great deal in stabilizing the lake level - Thank you, John!



**Where Will All This Snow Go?** There is concern around the state for widespread spring flooding, which you can learn more about at the [Minnesota Climatology Working Group 2011 Spring Flood Outlook](#) web page. You can see specific information about the Minnesota River flood potential at [Shakopee](#). We should all be especially grateful for the bigger Riley culvert with all of this high water potential. Let's hope we don't get a lot of rain on top of the melting snow.

**Spring? Really?** We change to Daylight Savings Time at 2:00 a.m. on the second Sunday in March - March 13th - only a week and a half away! "Spring Forward, Fall Back." The migrating robins arrive this month, and some have already been [spotted in this area](#). March is the time to set out nesting boxes for wood ducks and bluebirds and to tap the maple trees. It may not feel like spring, but I guess it is.

This e-newsletter is planned for publication in March, June, September and December.

If you have questions, comments or ideas about this bulletin - or if you need to add or update an email address - please contact Anne Florenzano at 952-937-5354 or [anneflorenzano@gmail.com](mailto:anneflorenzano@gmail.com)