

# The Lake Riley Launch

March 2012

*An email newsletter for  
Lake Riley Improvement Association Members*

**Lake Dates.** It's more important than ever that you come to the **annual Lake Riley Improvement Association meeting**. It will be held this month, on **Tuesday April 17 from 7-9 p.m. downstairs in Heritage Room 3 at the Eden Prairie City Center**. Mark your calendars now! A reminder will be sent out shortly before the meeting. There will be no election of new officers this year.

**It is vital that you all come to the annual meeting because we have two unusually important issues to discuss.** First is the concern on the part of the U of M carp study team about how - despite removing so many carp from Lake Riley - our water clarity has showed so little improvement. They have observed a shocking lack of natural vegetation in the lake by the end of the summer, and feel it is a serious contributing factor to the turbidity. Dr. Peter Sorensen be speaking on this issue, and **will discuss the idea of having all lake residents refrain from having their shoreline sprayed for weeds or using herbicides this summer.** (Please read the attached Aquatic Plants brochure from Dr. Sorensen's lab)

Second, there has been a lot of passion and energy going to efforts to stop the spread of zebra mussels into our lakes. Joe Shneider of the Christmas Lake Homeowners Association, Steve Gunther of the Lake Minnewashta Preservation Association and Steve Jenks of the Lotus Lake Association have formed the Lake Action Alliance to find workable solutions that can be implemented statewide to prevent the spread of this invasive species. The Riley Purgatory Bluff Creek Watershed District has passed an AIS Prevention Resolution and is currently working on a plan for partnering with cities and counties within their boundaries on AIS Prevention. Unfortunately the City of Chanhassen chose not to include Lake Riley in their Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) plan due to the fact that the boat landing is in Eden Prairie. Although disappointing, it is a positive step forward for the City of Chanhassen to at least get AIS in their plan. We will have someone speak on these efforts and **how the LRIA can help.**

**The extent to which we support and help the University team clear up our lake, and help the Lake Action Alliance keep our lake free of zebra mussels, depends on YOU! Come on Tuesday, April 17 and be a part of our decision-making process.**

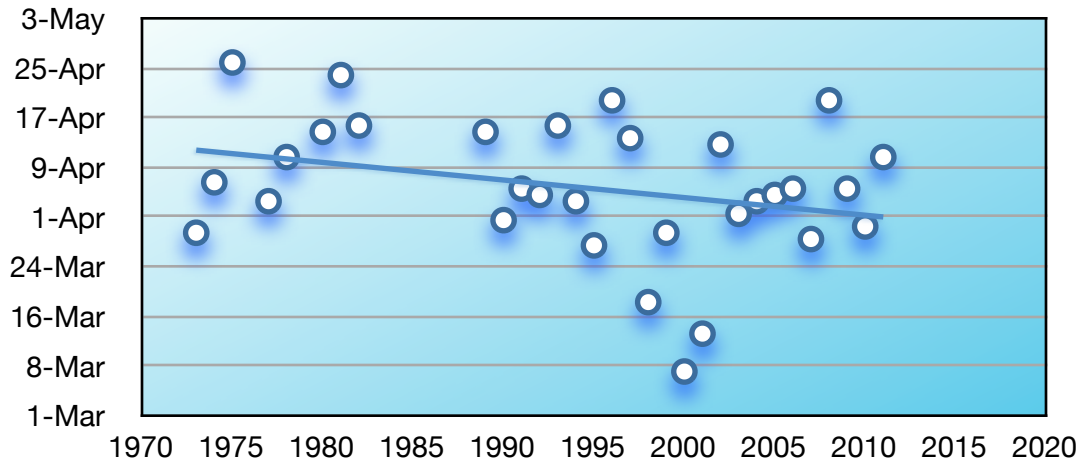
**Lake Ice.** There's only one thing to say for sure about this year's lake ice: it has been STRANGE.



*Open water on Lake Riley 1/15/12. Photo by John Bushey*

Residents who have lived on Lake Riley for decades have never seen the ice remain open the way it has this year. Two people went through the ice on New Years eve day, and a car fell through on January 21st. Fortunately everyone survived the experience, but this spring **STAY OFF THE ICE!** With no idea how to record a winter ice-in date for 2011, for certain the ice-out for Spring 2011 was April 11. Below is the chart of historical ice-out dates for Lake Riley:

### Lake Riley Iceout Dates



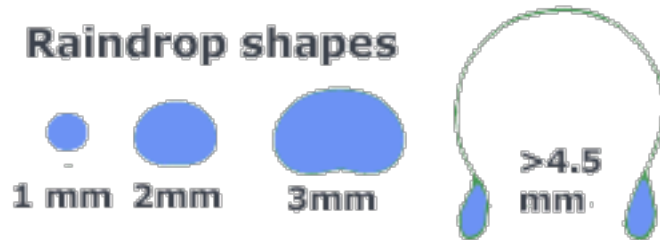
Remember to look and listen for the loons as soon as the ice is gone; they arrive immediately after the ice breaks up. Loons can't stand on land. They fly to large rivers or bodies of water that are open and then they wait for the small lakes to open to begin the nesting season. They keep checking the situation daily, which is why they often arrive on the day the ice finally goes out.

**Rain Gardens.** It's never too early to start thinking about gardening! Although we've been in a drought, it'll rain again soon enough. As the earth wakes up in the spring and you get outside in your yard, it is a good time to start thinking about whether you have a runoff area that flows into the lake. Did you know that half of all storm water pollution comes from residential property? Nearly 70% of the pollution in our surface waters gets there through storm water runoff, according to studies by the Environmental Protection Agency, and 50% of that pollution is chemical pollution from products we use for our yard care and household activities and from our yard waste. This [Rain Garden information](#) might help give you some ideas. Or take a class! The third attachment to this email lists some interesting and pertinent classes being offered this spring by the Eden Prairie Community Education in Water-Smart Landscaping; The Scoop on Aquatic Invasive Species; Living with Shoreland Workshop; plus a Home, Landscape, Garden & EverythingSpring Expo on March 17.

**Rain.** We complain when we get too much; we complain when we get too little. Let's face it, water falling to the earth in the form of rain is an important cycle for our Earth, otherwise known as the [Blue Planet](#). Here are ten facts about rain:

1. The umbrella was originally invented to protect people from the hot sun. The word umbrella comes from the Latin word umbra, meaning shade or shadow
2. Rain drops can fall at speeds of about 22 miles an hour.
3. Rain starts off as ice or snow crystals at cloud level.
4. A world record rainfall occurred at Holt, Missouri on June 22, 1947 when it rained 12 inches in just 42 minutes. This averages to over 1/4 of an inch of rainfall per minute. On July 4th, 1956 In Unionville, Maryland 1.23 inches of rain fell in 1 minute.
5. The windward slopes of mountain ranges generally receive heavy rainfall; the leeward slopes receive almost no rain. The southwest coast of Chile, the west coast of Canada, and the northwest coast of the United States receive much rain because they are struck by the moisture-bearing westerlies from the Pacific and are backed by mountains that force the winds to rise and drop their moisture. The territories immediately east of the regions mentioned are notably dry.
6. Hawaii is the wettest state in the U.S., which receives an annual rainfall of 63.70 inches.
7. Nevada is the driest state in the U.S., which receives an annual rainfall of only 9.54 inches.
8. The longest rain-free period in the United States was 767 days (2 years, 37 days), from October 3, 1912 to November 8, 1914 at Bagdad, California.

9. Thousands of Texas rice farmers won't be getting irrigation water anytime soon, with more than 40 percent of the state in severe drought. The water level in Travis and Buchanan lakes are currently 3,200 acre-feet (1 billion gallons) short of the stage they must reach before the farmers can receive water.
10. Small raindrops (radius < 1 millimeter (mm)) are spherical; larger ones assume a shape more like that of a hamburger bun. When they get larger than a radius of about 4.5 mm they rapidly become distorted into a shape rather like a parachute with a tube of water around the base --- and then they break up into smaller drops.



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