

Indian Lake Smoke Signal

• INDIAN LAKE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION •

President's Message

by Tim Watts

"Some old-fashioned things like fresh air and sunshine are hard to beat."

- L.I. Wilder

The spring season is in full swing and it has been wonderful to see many neighbors out tending to their homes, preparing their gardens, playing in the yard, and just enjoying the warmer weather. I often feel very blessed to live in this neighborhood. I encourage you to get out and enjoy the scenery and wildlife around us. Use that kayak you forgot about and go watch the wading birds catch fish, or check out the turtles sunbathing. Walk to one of our beaches and enjoy the peaceful view of our lake. I know for me, it is easy to get lost in the hustle of the day and not take advantage of the small moments to soak in the scenery.

Speaking of work, here are a few of the things that have been going on this spring with the board and tasks around the lake. The unexpected item on today's list is the privacy fence at the spoils area. It was known to have a rotted post near the gate, but in true fashion, where there is one there is more. Almost all the fence posts had some degree of rot. Enough so that the fence was easily pushed over during inspection. The fence was installed around 2016 and made entirely of cedar. The average lifespan of ground contact cedar is about 10 years, so I feel the fence did as expected. Thank you Jeff Gray for helping remove some of the broken posts. After contemplating a self install vs. hiring it out, we ultimately chose hiring a fence company. The Draper Fence company, which we used to fix the fencing at the dam and the tennis court, came back with a very reasonable quote and will try to

expedite the installation. This will keep us more focused on other items that usually make May a busy month for the lake.

South Beach grass is coming in very nice. This was a project we completed ourselves and saved some money. Thank you to Shawn and Alyssa Alexander for bringing an extra truck load of dirt and spreading it to fill some low spots. Also, thank you Shawn for helping spread the 12 bails of straw. A shout out to Chad Rosenbrock for letting me borrow a water pump to water the grass. Luckily the rain worked in our favor and helped that process as well. My goal as beach committee chair is to keep some focus on south beach this year and continue with some other improvements pending board approval. Stay tuned for that!

A huge shout out to Jeff Van Treese, Shawn Alexander, Ron Gillum, Patrick Kennedy, Mark Bluemle, Paul Legge, Mark York, Pete Winters, and Alex Abell for showing up to help get the dredge in the water. A special thanks to JVT for all the extra time spent getting the trailer and the dredge ready for splashing. I am learning this is a complex task that has to happen in order to get the dredge in and out of the water. We definitely could not do it without Ron's driving skills, and Jeff's years of experience. Thanks again everyone.

In closing, I want to say thank you to Alyssa for all the hard work she has put into her new role as treasurer and also a thanks to the neighborhood for your patience as we work to update some of our procedures and accounting software. I believe the work she is putting in to help streamline how we invoice, pay employees, file taxes, and offer the ability for members to pay electronically is much needed. It will help minimize errors, improve accountability, and just overall make us more efficient. I look forward to seeing everyone around the lake and I wish you a healthy and happy summer!

A Quarter Century of Progress

by Mark Rumreich

As my time as president has come to an end, I'd like to reflect on the progress made by the board over the past 25 years. What follows is not just a list of projects, but a story of how the association evolved, from reacting to problems to building the capability to manage them proactively.

The Dredge

The most important decision made by the board during this period was the purchase of a modern dredge in 2000. After careful analysis, it became clear that owning and operating our own dredge was the only sustainable way to control long-term costs.

The association had owned a dredge in the 1960s, but that effort was unsuccessful. In the decades that followed, we relied on outside contractors to dredge periodically. These efforts were expensive and inconsistent, leaving the association in a cycle of rising costs and recurring debt.

In 2000, the board identified the IMS 4010, a paddlewheel-propelled dredge that offered significant advantages over traditional cable- or spud-driven systems. After visiting an operation in West Virginia and speaking with its operator, we became convinced this was the right path forward.

What we underestimated was the complexity of running a dredging operation. Purchasing the dredge was only the beginning. We had to secure financing, prepare a spoils area, build a weir, acquire discharge pipe, design and build a trailer, recruit and train operators, find a mechanic, establish payroll, obtain multiple forms of insurance, secure permits, install fuel storage, assemble a workboat, and even fabricate our own floats. In short, we transformed from an HOA into an organization capable of running a full-scale dredging operation.

Lake Studies

While the dredge addressed the symptoms of sedimentation, the board also wanted to understand its causes.

In 2000, we commissioned a \$5,000 study from Purdue University to evaluate whether actions within our 25-square-mile watershed could reduce sediment inflow. A second study by Purdue graduate student Nick Jokay, conducted at no cost to the association, provided additional insight. Although not perfect, these studies highlighted issues such as poor water flow patterns in Papoose and confirmed that sedimentation was a widespread watershed problem.

In 2004, Marion County commissioned Commonwealth Engineering to conduct a detailed analysis of the dam and lake. Their findings made it clear that we would eventually need to increase spillway capacity by constructing an auxiliary spillway.

Development Activism

The Purdue studies identified upstream development as a major source of sediment entering the lake. While developers are required to implement erosion controls, enforcement was often weak.

In response, we became actively involved. Through the Watershed Watchdogs and the Indian Creek Watershed Alliance, we monitored developments throughout the watershed and insisted on proper erosion control measures. When necessary, we sought remediation for damage caused by runoff. We also made our presence known at rezoning hearings, encouraging developers to work with us proactively. Over time, we reached agreements with dozens of developers.

The Lawsuits

Our activism eventually led to legal action when necessary.

After a major storm washed a construction cone from the INDOT project at Pendleton Pike and Sunnyside into our lake, along with significant sediment, we had clear proof of negligence. The event even created a new peninsula in Papoose. Media coverage helped bring attention to the issue, and the resulting lawsuit yielded approximately \$250,000. A second lawsuit against an INDOT contractor added another \$100,000.

A decade later, similar negligence at the Westminster Village North construction site, through which Indian Creek flows, resulted in another \$250,000 settlement.

These actions not only compensated the association but also reinforced the importance of accountability within the watershed.

Building Financial Stability

Recognizing the need for long-term infrastructure funding, the board established a cumulative fund in 2003, allocating \$12,000 annually. This fund was further strengthened by proceeds from lawsuits and developer agreements.

Traffic Calming

Traffic safety, particularly along South Drive, has been a long-standing concern.

In 2001, the City of Lawrence installed its first "Slow Down in Our Neighborhood" sign on South Drive, with strong community support. This initiative helped raise awareness and led to additional signage throughout the city.

Efforts to implement more substantial traffic calming measures were more challenging. After years of advocacy, speed humps were eventually installed, only to be removed in 2021. Efforts to re-engage the city on this issue continue.

Spillway Wingwall Repair

By 2006, the spillway wingwalls had deteriorated significantly. Repairs required lowering the lake level by six feet, a process that carried risk.

After careful preparation, the drawdown was completed, but complications followed. A tree trunk became lodged in the sluice gate during closure, damaging the gearbox. Through quick problem-solving, and an unlikely eBay find, we were able to rebuild the mechanism and restore operation.

Communication and Technology

In 2007, as smartphones and social media were just emerging, the association launched its first website. Over time, the site expanded in both content and functionality, improving communication with residents. The domain IndianLakeHOA.com was added shortly thereafter.

Community Amenities

Tennis Court

By 2009, the tennis court had deteriorated beyond repair. The board chose to replace it entirely at a cost of approximately \$15,000, preserving an important community amenity.

Docks and Beaches

In 2017, growing demand for boat slips led to a major overhaul of docking facilities. North Beach received a new seawall and expanded recreational space, while South Beach was upgraded with a flexible floating dock system. The bumper innovation developed by the board during the project was adopted by the installation company for their other customers.

South Beach Enhancements

More recent improvements have focused on expanding usable green space and addressing drainage issues by filling low-lying areas.

Spoils Management and Storage

Managing dredged material has been an ongoing challenge. Early efforts relied on small-scale free dirt distribution through ads on Craigslist, but over time we developed partnerships for larger-volume removal.

A key breakthrough came through a relationship with Ski Landscape, which recognized the value of our material as topsoil when properly processed.

In addition, increased boat ownership led to expanded off-season storage needs. Improvements to the spoils area—including a new fence and gate—enhanced both capacity and appearance. A zoning variance was required and successfully obtained to complete the project.

Property Tax Reassessment

The 2012 Marion County reassessment created unintended consequences for our association, as HOA dues are tied to

land value. The changes caused significant disruption for Indian Lake.

Through persistent engagement with the assessor's office, we were able to correct many of the issues. Notably, Indian Lake common property was reclassified with zero assessed value, and \$6,000 of prior year payments were refunded.

The Lift Station Battle

In 2015, the City of Lawrence proposed constructing a major sewage lift station near the Indian Creek bridge. The project raised concerns about odor, noise, and environmental risk.

Residents mobilized quickly, organizing meetings and building support. The DNR joined the effort, and the issue became a factor in a closely contested mayoral election. Ultimately, the project was halted.

While successful, the effort left unresolved the long-term issue of the aging sewer line beneath the lake.

Governance Modernization

The association's governing documents, originally written in 1929, required periodic reaffirmation votes to avoid dissolution, a significant risk.

Beginning in 2019, a committee undertook a comprehensive modernization effort. Goals included eliminating the reaffirmation requirement, separating covenants and bylaws, clarifying governance structures, and incorporating modern HOA practices.

After extensive community input, the revised documents were approved in December 2021. While discussion continues on architectural control provisions, the association now operates under a more stable and modern framework.

East End Boat Storage

To address increasing demand for off-season boat storage and reduce congestion at the beaches, the board expanded storage capacity at the east end and discontinued beach storage. This improved both functionality and seasonal usability of the beaches.

Conclusion

It has been an honor to serve as board president during a period of such significant progress. Over the past 25 years, the association has evolved into a more capable, resilient, and forward-looking organization. These accomplishments were not the work of any one individual, but of dedicated board members, engaged residents, and a community willing to take on complex challenges.

There are important projects ahead, but the foundation is strong. I have confidence that the board will continue to move Indian Lake forward.

Ethanol-Free Gas: A Smart Choice for Your Lawn and Garden Equipment

If your mower, blower, chainsaw or outboard sputters or refuses to start after sitting awhile, the fuel might be to blame. Most gasoline today contains 10% ethanol—fine for cars, but tough on small engines. Ethanol attracts moisture and can separate, leading to corrosion, gummy carburetors, and cracked rubber parts. The result? Hard starts, rough running, and costly repairs.

That's why many people prefer ethanol-free gasoline for their lawn and garden equipment. It burns cleaner, lasts longer in storage, and keeps engines running smoothly. Without ethanol's water-absorbing properties, fuel stays stable for months, making it ideal for seasonal equipment.

Until recently, finding ethanol-free fuel nearby was a challenge. Most stations offered only E10, forcing people to hunt down marine or specialty suppliers. Luckily, the new Wawa on 96th Street now carries ethanol-free gasoline—no more long drives.

Though it costs a bit more per gallon, ethanol-free gas pays off quickly. Engines last longer, repairs are fewer, and fuel stays fresh longer, reducing waste. Mechanics consistently recommend it for anyone using small engines or outdoor power tools.



Easter Egg Hunt Results:

0-3 Age Group

Most Eggs - Peyton Free

Least Eggs - Lyle Decker - Sweeney grandchild

Golden Egg - Peyton Free

4-7 Age Group

Most Eggs - Frankie Shoemaker - McDaniels grandchild

Least Eggs - Charlie Thoe - McDaniels group

Golden Egg - Ryan Decker - Sweeney grandchild

8-10 Age Group

Most Eggs - Danny Chamberlin - Gundaker grandchild

Least Eggs - Hayley Chamberlin - Gundaker grandchild

Golden Egg - Matthew Kennedy

Thanks to the Civic Committee for sponsoring another



Easter Egg Hunt

Indian Lake springtime magic in full bloom! From egg hunts to bunny hugs, our neighborhood came together for a day of laughter, joy, and sweet memories.



Across the Fence

by Andy Van Treese

Announcing the birth of **Dan and Joyce Van Treese's grandson, Cameron James Van Treese**, in February. His older brother, Colson, is as proud as can be! Stephen sent me a photo of his two sons all "horsed up" ready for the Oaks and Kentucky Derby.

Jeff and Kathy Van Treese welcomed their great-grandson, **Jeremiah Joseph Ragonesi-Powell**, on February 9th. . .the same day that Cameron was born!

Congratulations to **Mark and Lori Rumreich** on the birth of their first grandchild, **Valentin**. He arrived in December.



Thanks to **Anderson Slocum** for installing a new backboard at the Tennis Court. This was his Eagle Scout Service Project. Now the Slocum Family has two Eagle Scouts. I earned my Award in August, 1981. Once an Eagle, always, an Eagle!

Congratulations to **Mark Rumreich** on the publication of his book *Here I'll Stay, The Legacy of Pisek, North Dakota*. It's based on the true stories of the men and women who built a prairie community from nothing in the 1880s.

Great News! **Bob and Jean Gundaker** adopted **June Nichols'** two beloved cats, Simon and Ollie. June has moved in with her daughter, Kelly, and couldn't take the kitties with her due to allergies. Stevi Kersh and I posted on Facebook and texted other contacts trying to find them a loving home and keep them together as they have a strong bond. They didn't have to move very far away....right next door. Congratulations to Simon and Ollie for finding their forever homes!

Prayers for **Bob Ferguson's** recovery as he is fighting to get better. Bob has been my next-door neighbor for over 25 years. Bob enjoys living here on Indian Lake and loves the nature, views, and community.

Congratulations graduates **Addie Korzekwa** and **Lydia Korzekwa**. Addie graduates from I.U. Indy and Lydia from Lawrence North. Lydia was accepted at West Point Academy and will be attending there in the fall.

Welcome new neighbors, **Peter & Heather Winters and son, Charlie!** They purchased Kate and Amie's house on South Drive. Heather enjoys the peacefulness and Peter says Indian Lake fits his lifestyle. I couldn't agree more with both sentiments.

Congratulations to LN graduate **Jase Russell**. He was on the cross country and track teams and I saw many positive posts about him on Facebook.

As many of you know, **Bob Kevoian** passed away this spring. Alongside his longtime radio partner, **Tom Griswold**, Bob helped bring a fresh, edgy style to Indianapolis radio on Q95, making the morning drive more entertaining and enjoyable for countless listeners over the years. Bob also spent several years living on Indian Lake, and many in our community remember him fondly. Our heartfelt condolences go out to **Wade Baertschi** and his family.

Please contact me for any future announcements or scoops for Across the Fence.



Recognition

The Civic Committee surprised Mark Rumreich with a crystal recognition award at the May board meeting in honor of his 25 years of service as Indian Lake Board President. The award was inscribed:

"25 Years

Indian Lake Board President

Thank you for your service to our community!"

The recognition was deeply appreciated.



Blast from the Past

From the Indianapolis Star, Friday, February 3, 2006.

In the same edition, Mayor Cantwell predicts a brighter future for Lawrence. Her State of the City talk included a pledge to work with the council and a forecast of more development.

Lakefront

◆ About one-third of 120 homes are on the lake.
From N1

residences, and several families have now lived there for a few generations.

◆ **Community life:** About a third of Indian Lake's 120 homes are on the lake, which is the center of the community life, said Mark Rumreich, president of the neighborhood association. All residents have access to the beaches and the lake, he said.

Events, from picnics and fishing tournaments to an Easter egg hunt and fall hayride, occur throughout the year.

"It is a very unique community in that we have the lake, we have tons of wildlife," said Marge Crouch, a 35-year resident. "We're just a close-knit community with a lot of activities going on."

◆ **Current issues:** In 2000, the neighborhood association paid \$200,000 to fight its biggest problem: sediment in the lake. With the new dredging device, they can clear the sediment themselves instead of having to hire a contractor, Rumreich said.

Parts of the neighborhood are also seeing increasing traffic and are trying to find ways to slow it.

— Andy Gammill

★ Want us to check out your neighborhood? Contact us at stamorth@indystar.com or call (317) 444-2600.

CHECK OUT MY NEIGHBORHOOD

Indian Lake

Lakefront living offers benefits of country, city

Star report

Centered on a 60-acre lake with two beaches, the Indian Lake neighborhood appears suddenly off Sunnyside Road. The former lake resort area has transformed itself into a permanent neighborhood that residents say treats them to a taste of

LAWRENCE

the country in the heart of the city.

◆ **History:** Indian Lake itself was created in 1929 by damming Indian Creek, and summer cottages began popping up throughout the 1930s, '40s and '50s. The lake always has been used for fishing, boating, swimming and other recreational activities. Water skiing was banned in 1960, however. Eventually the homes became year-round

See Lakefront, Page N2

When You Need To Call



KEEP THIS WITH YOUR INDIAN LAKE PHONE DIRECTORY

Assessments – Alyssa Alexander	719-0910
Beach reservations - Tim Watts	765-430-4130
Boat slip rentals – Alyssa Alexander	719-0910
Boat stickers - RJ Russell	281-0024
Car stickers - Tim Watts	765-430-4130
Civic Committee – Stevi Kersh	691-4854
South Beach gate key - Kevin Hunt	716-7264

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tim Watts (president)	765-430-4130
Shawn Alexander (vp)	463-248-7284
Alyssa Alexander (treasurer)	719-0910
Patrick Kennedy (secretary)	908-0007
Josh Betz	626-8442
Joe Dayan	910-7751
Annie Horvath	869-3811
Kevin Hunt	716-7264
Jeff Martin	626-1442
Mark Rumreich	643-6733

Board meetings are on the second Wednesday of each month except in January. Meetings are at 7 PM at the Indian Lake Country Club except in January and November. All Indian Lake residents are welcome to attend. Visit the Indian Lake website at www.IndianLakeHOA.com

Meet the Neighbor

by Kimberly Hunt

In some ways, Jeff Grey's connection to Indian Lake started before he was born, when his grandparents, Jack and Pat Grey, with their 3 children, moved to their home on Shoshone Drive in 1967. Jeff's dad moved

away from Indian Lake to start his family, but the tragic death of his wife in 1991, changed life dramatically for the Greys. Jeff, only 7 years old when his mother died, started spending most of his time with his grandparents on weekends and summer breaks. "I was always on the lake," remembers Jeff. "[My grandparents] never knew where I was, but they knew I was one hundred percent in a boat."

Jeff recalls rowing his fishing boat around a chain of three islands west of Papoose, where the Canada Geese laid their eggs; past the North Beach where the Zaineys, VanTreeses and friends would be locked in volleyball combat; then along the French estate, where huge parties were in full swing. During those boyhood voyages, Jeff used to dream of growing up and having his own home on Indian Lake.

Back in those days, Jeff Jr. also envisioned himself as a machinist like his grandfather, and his father, who was a machinist for Schumacher Racing. Shortly after graduation from Mount Vernon High School in 2003, however, Jeff had an opportunity to go to work at a plumbing company and, almost instantly, he knew it was the career path for him. He invested four years in plumbing school to become a plumbing contractor.

Over nearly two decades, Jeff worked as a Journeyman plumber for various plumbing companies and taught at the Mechanical Skills Plumbing School. In 2020, Jeff discussed with his grandfather, Jack, the idea of starting his own plumbing company, and later that year, Grey's

Plumbing was launched. Jeff worked 430 straight days without taking a single weekend, holiday or any kind of day off. He worked six months before hiring help, and three and a half years before cutting his work week from seven down to five days. Now, Grey's Plumbing consists of four journeyman plumbers, three apprentices, three office staff, and five plumbing vans servicing the greater Indianapolis area. Jeff has recently purchased and broken ground on a new shop at Pendleton Pike and 56th Street to house the business he built on honest labor, fair pricing, and the word of mouth from satisfied customers, without a single advertisement. This goes to show that sometimes a "dream come true" looks like a whole lot of hard work.

Some dreams, however, seem to fall right into one's lap. In 2017, Jeff was living in Ingalls with his fiancé, Renee, and their daughter, Preslee, when his grandparents' neighbor, Ernestine Lyke, approached the Greys to inquire if their grandson might be interested in buying her house. She could no longer keep up the house and property and no one in her family wanted it. She wanted it to go to someone she knew would appreciate it, and she remembered Jeff spending every waking hour on the lake as a boy. Jeff was certainly interested in the lakefront property on Shoshone, but less certain he could afford it - that is until Mrs. Lyke offered it to him for \$150,000. Grey jumped at the chance to realize his childhood dream of living on Indian Lake and immediately bought the house 2 doors down from his grandparents. Unfortunately, the sale of his home in Ingalls to Dollar General was not as swift and resulted in Jeff carrying two mortgages for 7 months. Still, to him, it was worth it.

Nowadays, Jeff is living his dream as an ILIA resident, 2 houses away from his grandparents, and watching his daughter enjoy the same beautiful surroundings he grew up in. "At first, she was disappointed to move out here," Grey admits. "She wanted to live in a neighborhood like her friends." Then, one day, Preslee's friends came over and told her they wished they lived on a lake. "She realizes, now, how lucky she is," he chuckles. And, like father, like daughter, he adds "I can't get her out of the water!"

