



Spread Eagle Chain O' Lakes Association, Inc.

Newsletter Spring/Summer 2015

A Message from the President

by Glen Johnson

As usually happens, spring eventually comes around after a rough winter. For those who are not year-round residents, it is time to think of getting the house ready and the boat launched.

If you like to read the legal notices in the Florence Mining News, you might want to seek professional help; however, you would also know that last fall the County Board approved a boat launch fee on county owned landings, which includes North Lake landing, specifically for capital improvements at the landing sites. This action came out of the Forestry and Parks Committee of the Board. The committee is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the county owned landing sites. Like a lot of projects in the coun-

ty, this work is funded by state grants through the DNR. The committee was informed by the state that unless they instituted a launch fee, the amount of funding would be reduced.

Separate and apart from the activity of the Forestry and Parks Committee, we have been talking to the county about a launch fee. Our concern is that the county needs a funding source to pay the clean boats/clean waters inspection and boat wash expenses.

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Points of Interest

- *The Volunteer Anglers Journal Field Data Form and the Family Information Form are now available on-line:*

www.SpreadEagleChain.org

- *Portable Boat Wash purchased and delivered.*
- *New Buoys for Railroad Lake Channel*

In Spring, ones' interest turns to...

Spring, when one starts thinking of making a great drive, putt or even a hole-in-one; and for some of us it is catching a trophy fish or enjoying a great meal from our day's catch.

The seasons opens the first Saturday in May for northern, walleye and largemouth Bass. Smallmouth can be kept on June 21, 2015 and muskie on May 24, 2015. Pan fish season is open year round; to date the size limits are the same as last year.

If you are a trophy hunter and want one for your wall, I think small mouth bass and muskie are meant to be trophies only. Large mouth bass over 18 inches also fall into the trophy category.

In early summer when looking for successful fish bait; worms and flies work for bluegills on beds, crappies enjoy light jigs. Largemouth bass will hit floating minnow bait, grubs and plastic worms. As the water warms, spinner bait and diving crank bait begin to work.

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New buoys in Railroad Lake channel

By Kelly Crotty, DNR Conservation Warden



As you start thinking about enjoying your first summer boating trip on the Chain, I want to make sure you are aware of two new buoys marking the Railroad Lake channel.

You will see these two buoys in the channel where Railroad Lake goes into Little Railroad Lake. These new markers are in response to a call I received last fall from the Town of Florence officials concerned about boat traffic in the narrow channel.

You may recall there have been concerns about boaters getting too close to the docks in the channel area. This is a safety issue and an enforcement issue, as there is a Wisconsin law that mandates boating speed limits in areas like this.

The Town of Florence, in 2010, exempted most of the channels in the Chain from the law that prevents operating a motorboat at a speed above Slow-No-Wake within 100 feet of shore. However, please note boat operators still must operate at or below Slow-No-Wake speed within 100 feet of a dock.

To answer the town's request to help with boat traffic concerns and to satisfy the Wisconsin law, I went to this area and used a Rangefinder to measure the distance between docks in that part of the lake. I learned there is approximately a 41-foot strip between the north and south shores where a motorboat can legally operate on plane.

I had a productive conversation with town officials and Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes Association leaders. The Town of Florence officials agreed to provide two new buoys to mark this narrow channel.

As you use the lake, remember the red buoy will be on the north side of the channel, and a green buoy will be on the south side. (Here's one way to remember: "Red-Right-Returning" to harbor or "Green can on right-to open seas tonight"). Boats operating at or above Slow-No-Wake will have to stay between these buoys. Any boats operating below Slow-No-Wake speed including kayaks and canoes can go around the buoys.

A **Can Buoy** marks the **Right side** of the channel leaving the harbor. It will be **green** and have **odd** numbers on it.



A **Nun Buoy** marks the **Left side** of the channel leaving the harbor. It will be **red** and have **even** numbers on it. **Red Day markers** are often used in shallow areas for the same purpose..

Please pass the word to your neighbors who may not initially understand the importance of the buoys. I am hopeful these markers will help boaters operate legally, and provide more of a safety zone to adjacent property owners who wish to enjoy the lake.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 715-528-4400, Extension #111.

Anchors Away!!!

Warden Crotty's top 10 Boating Safety Tips to review before leaving the dock....



1. Make sure your safety gear is in the boat. This includes the plug, personal flotation devices (PFD lifejackets), a Type IV PFD if required, lights and a fire extinguisher.
2. Sniff for fumes before starting the engine. Open all hatches and run the blower after you refuel and before getting underway. Sniff for fumes before starting the engines and if you smell fumes, do not start the engine.
3. All motorboats including boats with electric motors are required to be registered. If your registration is Expired you can renew on line at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/Permits/registrationandtitling.html#0>
4. One wearable PFD is required per person on board and it must be readily accessible, (better yet wear it!) In addition, boats 16 feet or longer (except canoes) must have a Type IV PFD (cushion or throw ring).
5. Everyone born on or after January 1, 1989, must have completed a boating safety course to operate a motor-boat (unless ages 10-15 and accompanied by a parent or guardian). You can take an online boat safety course at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/education/outdoorskills/onlineEd.html>
6. You are required to have your boat illuminated between sunset and sunrise and/or periods of low visibility such as fog with a bow and stern light. Check the lights and bulbs before dark to make sure they work.
7. Do not endanger yourself or others on the Chain by using alcohol. Use a designated driver or wait until coming off the water to consume alcohol. If contacted by law enforcement, impaired operators will be arrested and removed from the water to prevent a tragedy.
<http://dnr.wi.gov/education/outdoorskills/onlineEd.html>
8. Waterskiing/tubing hours are from sunrise to sunset. In addition to the operator, there must be a competent observer on board. Also, the watercraft must stay at least 100 feet from other vessels and persons in the water.
9. Know your Slow-No-Wake requirements including:
 - Staying 100 feet from docks or rafts
 - Staying 100 feet from boats at anchor
 - Staying 200 feet from shore with a Personal watercraft (jet skis)
 - Staying 100 feet from all shoreline with the exception of the following exempted channels:
 - North/Middle Lake
 - Middle/Long Lake
 - Middle/Bass Lake
 - Railroad Lake (must stay between the new buoys)
10. Prevent accidents including a fall overboard by keeping passengers from sitting on the gunwhale or on the Seatbacks, or outside the railings on the bow or other areas of the boat.

Enjoy the boating season!

DNR Conservation Warden Kelly Crotty

FOUR GRANTS COMPLETED: We did it!

In efforts to protect the beautiful Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes from invasive species, over the past five years, SECOLA applied for and was awarded four separate grants. Because the public boat launching facility is located on North Lake, it was determined that the lake needed to be the focus of our efforts. Originally, the goal was to monitor and protect the lake from invasive species that might be brought in from other lakes. At that time, there was no hard evidence of invasive species on our lakes. Our goal was to educate and monitor – to prevent invasives from being transported to the Chain of Lakes. As a part of this work, extensive research was done to expand on and update our understanding of the water, wild life, riparian areas, and vegetation. Investigation and education were a major part of these efforts.

The first of the grants, Phase I of the North Lake Stewardship Program, was awarded in 2011. Because of its expertise in this area, White Water Associates of Amasa, MI was chosen to conduct the consulting work necessary to complete the grant requirements. The work was done under the supervision of Dean Premo, Ph. D. Showing their support for SECOLA's efforts to protect the lake environment, White Water Associates also provided numerous hours of volunteer work. A continuation of these efforts was provided for in Phase 2 of this grant.

It was during the implementation of Phase 2 that invasive species were detected. Quick action was taken to both develop and implement a plan to try to get rid of, or at least contain, the invasive species. We needed to warn anyone using the lake that it is infected, address the probability of their spreading the species to other lakes, and educate them on how to care for their boats and gear in order to lessen the probability of that happening.

Fortunately, through Phase I and 2 grants, we had already developed a relationship with the DNR. The groundwork was laid. They knew that we had taken responsibility for our lakes' health and would work toward preserving it. The end result was that we were awarded two more grants: The Eurasian Water Milfoil Rapid Response Grant and the Aquatic Invasive Species Control Grant.

These last two grants not only focused on locating

and harvesting invasives, they also helped develop procedures for monitoring and containment.

One concrete result was the purchase of a North Star pressure washer. Through the efforts of Clean Boats Clean Waters and volunteers this washer will be utilized at the public landing beginning in the spring of 2015. New signage at the public landing is to help educate the general public of the importance of these efforts.

At this time, the final reconciliation of all four grants is in process. The books will be closed on June 30, 2015. An update will be provided at the annual meeting.

To offset SECOLA'S monetary commitment to the funding of the grants' projects, hundreds of hours of work were done by SECOLA volunteers. Each hour was valued with a dollar amount that was credited to SECOLA as part of its matching funds (those monies that we were committed to providing as our portion of the project cost). A vast number of volunteers put in hundreds of hours of work in order to meet or reduce the match set forth in the grants.

To each of the hundreds of persons who in any way supported the efforts laid out in the grants, "Thank You. We could not have done it without you."

Darlin Verley

Note from the editors:

Spread Eagle Chain O'Lakes Association, Inc (SECOLA) publishes this newsletter. We welcome your comments, any photos of general interest to the members and /or news articles for publication consideration.

Please forward your material via email to Deb Cini (debcini@charter.net) or Jane Patrick (grams2745@gmail.com). Our mailing address is P.O. Box 413 Florence, Wisconsin 54121,

Articles for the Fall/Winter newsletter are due by September 15, 2015

Images of Fall & Winter...



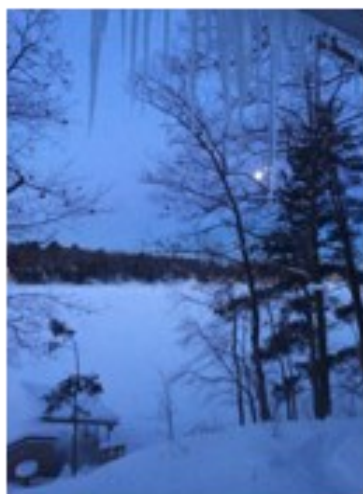
Getting ready for Deer Season at Super One...



Neighborhood deer seen multiple places around the Chain for the past three years.... She can only use three legs and gets around just fine....she's a survivor!



Making memories...
Photograph by Jim Zachs



Winter Magic
Photograph by Marti Muzzie

And looking forward to Spring!



Photograph by Ed Patrick



Photography by Jim Zacks

A Message from the President

Continued from page 1

Again, the county is dependent on annual state grants to fund the inspectors. The county has secured money to fund inspectors for the 2015 season but the amount available will not allow us the coverage on North Lake that we feel will make a meaningful impact. Wisconsin, like many other states, is dealing with limited financial resources and increasing demands for more spending. Future funding from the state may not be forthcoming. The county, to fulfill its fiduciary stewardship of the county lakes, should have a dedicated source of revenue for boat inspections in the absence of such state funding.

We, as well as other county organizations, lobbied the Forestry and Parks Committee that this fee should not be limited to capital improvements but also for boat inspection. As the fine print in the newspaper stated, we lost the argument at this time. So much for my career as a lobbyist.

Meanwhile, when the ice goes out, our friends, the zebra mussels, will still be with us. The goal now is to keep their relatives out of our lakes. We intend to fund additional time for the aforementioned boat inspectors with money you have donated designated for invasive species.

I hope you find the articles in this newsletter informative. Our phone numbers are listed if you have any comments or suggestions.

See you on the lakes! Glen

In the Spring...

Continued from Page 1

Polaroid sun glasses are helpful in locating fish in early spring and summer. Later in the summer, using a fish locator may help as the fish start living in the weed beds or on the outside edges, lures that are bigger and go deeper start to shine in the water. Some big fish will still go shallow at dawn and dusk.

We continue to see Eurasian Milfoil and an increasing amounts of zebra mussels on the Chain. Eric Engbretson, underwater photographer, has seen lakes with these invasive species and says the fish populations are not effected. Greg Matzke, Fisheries Biologist with Wisconsin DNR concurs with this opinion.

Each spring I enjoy looking at catalogs for new lures but the old favorites; rapalas, wiggle warts, jitterbugs and may others still work fine!

See you on the water,
Carl Sundberg



Ice Fishing– North Lake
Photograph by Jim Zacks

Fisheries Report-March 2015

by Greg Matzke, Fisheries Biologist, Wisconsin DNR

Some changes could be occurring to the fisheries management of the Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes (SECL). As most of you know we did a full comprehensive survey of the SECL in 2011. During this survey we got an in depth look at all the major fish populations. Different variables for each species were quantified including; abundance, size structure, growth rate, body condition and recruitment (natural reproduction). After evaluating the fishery I have made recommendations that will optimize the fishery in the SECL. In order to do this we will need to change the regulations for a number of species of fish in the Chain. Here are the changes I have proposed and the rationale behind these changes. All potential changes will be voted on April 13th at the Annual Conservation Congress spring hearings. If there is a favorable vote for the change the new regulation will be in place for the start of the 2016 fishing season.

Pan fish *Recommendation: Reduce the bag limit*

When we surveyed the SECL in 2011 we found a pan fish population that had very poor size structure (Figure 1). Only 13% of the bluegill captured were ≥ 7 inches and NO FISH were captured ≥ 8 inches. There are two reasons why a population may have poor size structure. Either the growth rates are bad (not allowing fish to achieve a large size), or the harvest is too high (not allowing fish to live long enough to achieve a large size). After analyzing the data collected during 2011 it turns out that the pan fish in the SECL do not have poor growth – they have average growth for the Northern Region of WI (Figure 2). This eliminates the idea that fish are not getting large because of poor growth and places the blame on over-harvest. In fact, the oldest bluegill we sampled during 2011 was only 7 years old, which is very young considering we see bluegill that are 10-12 years old in almost every other lake we sample.

So at the spring hearings this April there will be two different questions about pan fish management on the SECL. Based on the results of these questions there are two potential regulations that we could change to. One would be to reduce the current 25 fish daily bag limit to 10 fish daily on pan fish. The other option is to have a reduction in harvest while pan fish are spawning, which would mean a bag limit reduction to 5 fish/day for each species group (Bluegill/pumpkinseed, Yellow Perch and Black Crappie) during May and June and all other months maintaining the current 25 fish daily bag limit for pan fish.

(Continue on page 8)

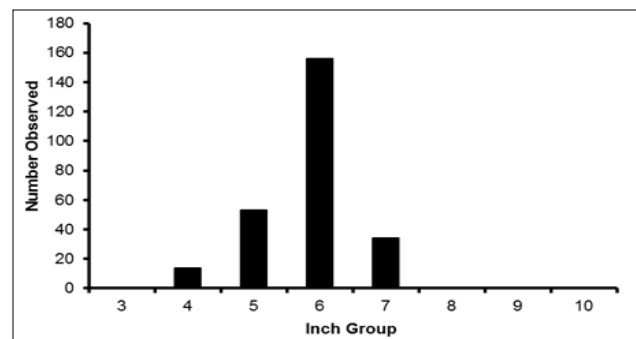


Figure 1. Size structure of bluegill captured during a 2011 survey of the Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes.

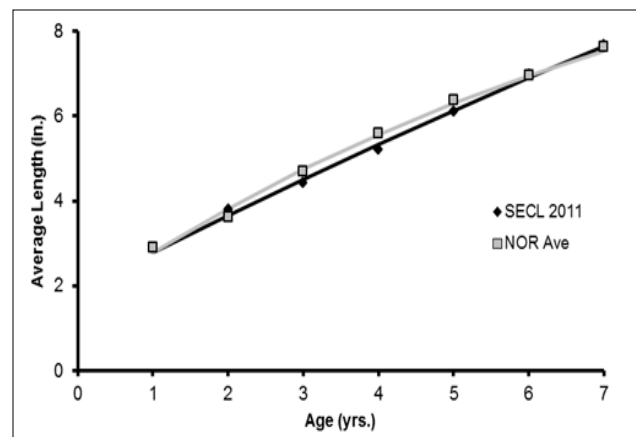


Figure 2. Bluegill growth, indexed using average length at age, for the SECL compared to the average for the Northern Region of Wisconsin (NOR).

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Bass

Recommendation: Liberalize the bag limit to allow more harvest

Bass were also sampled very extensively during 2011 revealing a very high abundance of largemouth bass and a low abundance of smallmouth bass. At nearly 7.5 adult largemouth bass per acre, the Spread Eagle Chain is the 2nd most abundant largemouth population surveyed in Florence County since 2011 (Figure 3). While largemouth bass are very abundant, the size structure of the population isn't very desirable (Figure 4). Just like pan fish the growth of largemouth bass was good in the SECL (Figure 5), so the reason for poor size structure is angler harvest. The disappearance of fish starting at 14 inches (the current minimum size limit) also supports that angler harvest is quite high on the SECL.

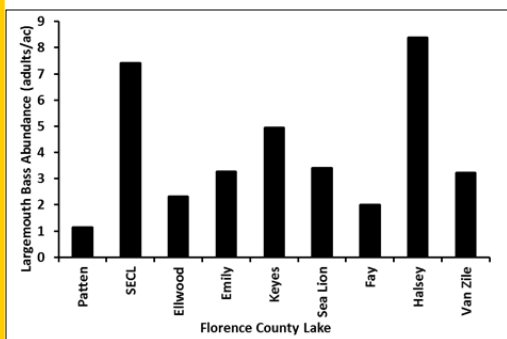


Figure 3. Abundance of largemouth bass in Florence County, broken down by individual lake.

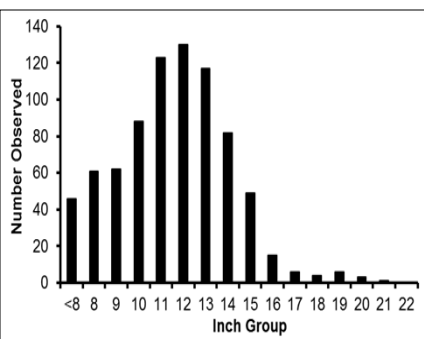


Figure 4. Size structure of largemouth bass captured during a 2011 survey of the SECL.

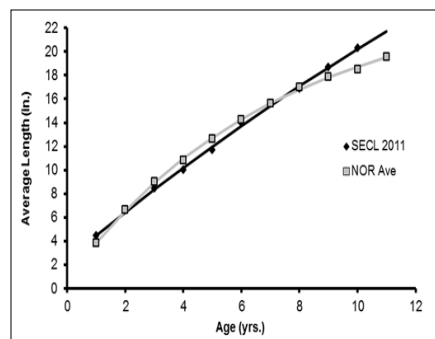


Figure 5. Largemouth bass growth, indexed using average length at age, for the SECL compared to the average for the

The new regulation that I proposed is that we remove the 14-inch minimum size limit and replace it with no minimum size limit, with a protected slot from 14 to 18 inches. This will be very beneficial to the fishery because it will allow for more harvest on an overabundant population (by allowing anglers to harvest the abundant small bass). Size structure will also improve because we will no longer be focusing the harvest on the large fish (which we are currently doing) but we will be protecting fish from 14 to 18 inches, which will create a higher quality bass population. In the long-run we will see the bass population go from overabundant to abundant, size structure go from poor to good and by reducing the abundance of largemouth bass we will likely see better survival of stocked walleye.

Walleye

Recommendation: Increase the minimum size limit to 18-inches

Walleye have been stocked in the SECL for a long time. However, when we surveyed the chain in 2011 we found that the adult density was extremely low (0.36 adults/acre). That is the lowest adult density of all the actively managed walleye lakes that I know of. The good news is that this very low population does have the ability to naturally reproduce (which does not occur in about 80% of all of our stocked walleye waters). However, only about 10% of the walleye population was female fish, which makes it tough for them to be successful at reproducing. The reason for the reduced female population is the current 15-inch size limit. Female walleye grow faster than males and achieve the size limit sooner. Since they reach the minimum size limit quicker they are also younger (which makes them easier to catch). The current regulation also allows female walleye to be harvested before they are sexually mature (had a chance to spawn). The regulation change I am proposing this year will allow more protection to female walleye. By protecting fish to 18 inches we will allow female walleye to be protected until they are sexually mature (giving them a chance to replace themselves before they are harvested) allowing the population to grow. This regulation change along with the changes made to our stocking program should allow the walleye population to grow at least 5 fold in the near future.

Contact Information

Officers

President.....	Glen Johnson.....	715-696-3751
Vice-President.....	Ed Patrick.....	785-224-1078
Treasurer.....	Dana Colenso.....	715-696-6026
Secretary.....	Joan Will.....	630-561-1964

Standing Committee Chairs

Natural Resources.....	Carl Sundberg.....	715-696-3442
Publications.....	Deb Cini.....	715-696-3653
	Jane Patrick.....	785-478-1814
Water Safety.....	Jay Weber.....	414-791-2974
Building Zoning/Tax Relations.....	Grant Erickson.....	715-696-3287
Lake Grants.....	Darlin Verley.....	262-366-5020
	Jack Fortier.....	715-696-3349
Membership.....	Jennifer Kellstrom.....	715-696-3667
Nominations.....	Cathy Curran.....	715-696-3361
Public Relations.....	Marion-Anderson-Peat...	715-696-6356
Social Events.....	Lois Sundberg.....	715-696-34

Special Committee

Boat Wash/Landing.....	David Pasahow.....	214-642-6597
	Joe Buchanan.....	305-720-646

Friends & Neighbors

In an effort to keep our membership records accurate, we are asking you to convey any changes in property owner information to:

Jennifer Kellstrom,
Membership Chairman
715-696-3667

Did you know....

All social activities (see page 11) are funded by Spread Eagle Chain of Lakes Association, including our 4th of July fireworks. We welcome all new and old residents of the Chain to join our association.

Membership forms are found on our website:
www.spreadeaglechain.org or contact any of our officers for more information.

Members please remember to cancel dinner reservations 24 hours in advance if you are unable to attend.



Photograph by Ed Patrick

SECOLA Book Club 2015

DATE	SELECTION	AUTHOR
June 10	Orphan Train	Christina Klein
June 24	Wilson (III&IV)	A. Scott Berg
July 15	The Uncommon Reader	Alan Bennett
July 29	The First Tycoon	T.J. Stiles
Aug 12	Water Is Wide	Pat Conroy
Aug 26	The Lowland	Jhumpa Lahiri

All meetings will be take place at the Florence Library (11 a.m.)

New members welcomed.

SECOLA Garden Club 2015 Tentative Calendar

<p>We are looking forward to spring, summer AND a lot of sunshine; especially the brave souls who were here all winter!</p> <p>There were several great suggestions for this summer's calendar from our members. We are excited to tackle the challenges of gardening "up north"!</p> <p>We welcome all new members to the Chain, our group ranges from novice gardeners to master gardeners. Please contact Deb Cini (715-696-3653) or Cathy Curran (715-696-3361) if you would like more information about this wonderful group.</p>	May 28	Trip to Tony's Greenthumb Nursery followed by lunch at the House of Ludington in Escanaba
	June 4	Trouble Shooting Gardens/Terrestrial Invasive Species
	June 18	Native Orchids & Wild Flowers Presentation
	July 9	Tea Party at the Chippewa Club
	July 23	Annual Meeting, Tour of Marcia McGregor's Gardens
	Aug 6	Tour Louis Ann Johnson's Rock Garden & Katie Coppock's Gardens with lunch at the Trading Post
	Aug 27	Un-Birthday Party –Presentation on Monarch Butterflies at Pine Grove Country Club



Photograph by Ed Patrick

Poet's Corner

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's life may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his
beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax
their lives with forethought of grief. I come into
the presence of still water and I feel above me the
day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I
rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Looking forward: Summer-Fall 2015 Social Schedule

DATE	EVENT	CONTACTS
Annual Events		
Tues 15-June	GOLF OUTING (2:00 PM) Pine Grove Country Club	Betty Rahm (715-696-3305) Nancy Dewey (715-528-4422)
Fri 3- July	FIREWORKS (Dusk)	Glen Johnson (715-696-3751)
Sat 4-July	BOAT PARADE (1:00 PM)	Cathy Curran (715-696-3361)
Sat 18-July	SECOLA ANNUAL MEETING (10:00 AM)..... Svecia Club	Glen Johnson (715-696-3751)

Monthly Events—SECOLA Dinners (5:00 p.m. Cocktails, 6:00 PM Dinner)

Mon 15-June	Pine Grove Country Club	Betty Rahm/Nancy Dewey
Tues 21-July	Chippewa Club	Kathy Johnson (715-696-3751) Lois Sundberg (715-696-3442)
Tues 18- Aug	Chippewa Club	Jane Patrick (785-478-1814) Ruth Noyce (715-696-3633)
Mon 21-Sept	T & T	Kathy Johnson (715-696-3751) Lois Sundberg (715-696-3442)

SECOLA Board Meetings at 7pm

Mon 8-June	Johnson Cottage
Mon 13-July	Johnson Cottage
Mon 31-Aug	Johnson Cottage

Other Events:

Tues Every	Men's Breakfast @ Holiday Kitchen (9 AM)
Wed Every	Ladies' Breakfast @ Barb's in Florence (10 AM)
Wed Every	Ladies' Dinner @ various places (6 PM)



2015 Boat Parade Theme: America the Brave!

Please join us for an
Ice Cream Social
&
Registration

12-1pm

Location: Cathy & John Curran's dock
Railroad Lake

You may preregister by calling
715-696-3361

Parade starts at 1pm



Spread Eagle O'Lakes Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 413
Florence, Wisconsin 54121

Forwarding Service Requested

In an effort to keep our membership records accurate, we are asking you to convey any changes in property owner information to the board.

Check our SECOLA website for news,
events, and updates to the calendar:
www.SpreadEagleChain.org



Yes, spring will come!
March 2015