

# Marcel Lake Estates Property Owners Association

103 Lake Drive, Dingmans Ferry, PA 18328

## President's Letter

By Frank Carrozza, Board President

First, I would like to start off by thanking the residents in the community for coming out and supporting the community's recreational functions this year. I would like to give a special thanks to all the people who made donations and were involved in making sure all of the community's events went off without a hitch.

Last year, I set a goal to keep up with the daily maintenance on the roads and to have two tarred and chipped roads completed. Thankfully, with the hard work of our maintenance crew and, with equipment barely holding up, we were able to keep that goal. I know for some people that it seems like it's going to take forever before we get to their road, but we are on our way.

Security - We only have enough money in our budget to have part-time security. We have been able to put our code enforcement personnel in a truck to keep an eye on things periodically during the week. At this time, we have been sending out warnings/fines for not obeying the community's rules and regulations. We don't want to send fines, but until everyone can obey the rules and regulations, we have no choice. The amount of complaints we receive regarding speeders, failure to stop at stop signs, trespassing, and illegal dumping of trash has consumed the office staff's time in finding these offenders. This is our community and we should have respect for our neighbors.

I would like to take the time to address the vacant lot owners. I understand your frustration on how this sewer problem has affected the value of your property and the ability to build. It's been a long time coming to get the moratorium lifted and it seems like there's no relief in sight. The board of directors has been trying to keep on top of this situation. We have spoken to representatives from PA American Water and they are waiting to have their engineered plan submittals

approved by the State and Township. Hopefully, they will be able to get started with the long overdue upgrades to the system by 2016 with the hope of being completed by 2017/2018.

As of now, we have almost a full board. We are looking to fill the Secretary position and would appreciate if someone could volunteer. I'm glad my message about people volunteering on the board was heard. We still need to increase our attendance at our meetings. With only three to five people showing up, it's hard to get out important information and sometimes is the reason why the residents feel like they are blindsided by certain issues. I'd also like to remind everyone that being on the board is a volunteer position. All board members have taken their own time out of their busy schedule to contribute to this community. Again, I will ask...before you complain, have you volunteered yet?

Everyone who purchased a home or property in Marcel Lake was issued a resale package. It's up to you to read the information that's provided so you're familiar with the rules and regulations. Because some residents choose not to read what's in the package doesn't excuse them from following the rules set forth by the community.

If you ever have any questions, you can call the office. 570-828-8244, M-F 8-4.

Thank you,  
Frank Carrozza

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## Lake and Dam Update

By Richard Hanel, Committee Chairperson

### Goose Population

The goose population appears to be continuing to dwindle, dropping for the second consecutive year. This may be attributable to the natural or man-made barriers that keep geese from making nests. By reducing the number of geese, we are helping to keep our lakes clean.

### Lake Weed Treatment

Lily pad treatment was completed on Marcel Lake on August 11. Unfortunately, it rained later that day and the treatment may not have been as effective as we would have liked. We'll continue to monitor the weed growth to determine if subsequent treatments are warranted.

### Boat Racks

The community boat racks have been a great success. As a result, we will add additional slots to some of the racks as well as a few wider slots for paddle boats. Please note, ALL BOATS except kayaks, rafts and paddle boards, must be registered with MLEPOA regardless of where they are stored! Registration stickers are free and can be easily obtained by visiting the office during business hours. Registrations help us identify boats that may be moved or stolen so we can notify the owners. Please note that any boat in the community storage area that doesn't have a sticker will be removed and a \$25 fine charged.

### Community Docks

The ice on Lake Marcel was 17 inches thick this winter causing the community dock to be heaved, snapping the metal struts. With the help of the community maintenance crew and board members, it was repaired. Also, unwanted floating docks from another community were picked up by Mike Kabbeko and Frank Carrozza, at no expense to our community, and added to Lake Renee.

### Dams – a 0.2% Probability may cost us \$600,000!

While we still question the need, we have continued our efforts to comply with the PA Department of

Environmental Protection's ("DEP") requirement that our dams have adequate spillways to survive a 500-year rainfall. Such a rainfall would drop 34 inches of rain in 24 hours. The probability of this occurring is exceptionally small, 0.02% (1 in 0.0002)! Yet the cost to build a larger spillway on Lake Marcel is quite large, estimated to be over \$600,000! Furthermore, the DEP is also mandating that bonds be posted for each dam in case the dams need emergency breaching - \$80,000 for Lake Marcel and \$30,000 for Lake Renee. We have written letters regarding the reasonability of these requirements to our local state representatives, the Governor, as well as to the Pike County Commissions and Community Associations Institute of PA. Requiring both the spillway and bonds seem excessive. We have also expressed our concerns regarding the seemingly unreasonable annual dam registration fees, \$1,500 for each dam, and the need for us to have an engineer inspect the dam each year after the State has already had an inspection. Inspections are costly and it also seems to be a redundant expense. In our meetings with the DEP, they did not appear capable of providing coherent reasoning for these requests.

The drawings for the spillway modifications were completed last December and permit requests were submitted to the DEP in January. However, despite their earlier urgency, we have yet to hear back from the DEP on this submission.

For more details on the on-going dam saga, please see the report given at the annual home-owners meeting held on September 5.



## Community Maintenance

By Carl Williams, Director

The board and community would like to express thanks to our maintenance staff for their tireless efforts performing maintenance of dams and common areas throughout the community. Another severe winter added additional snow and ice removal to their workload. Here are a few highlights on the maintenance issues within our community:

### Club House

The bad news is that our club house suffered serious damage attributable to the heavy snowfall this past winter. The roof just wasn't built to sustain this amount of snow. The good news is that the club house is being repaired, upgraded and improved through the use of insurance funds. Our objective is to make the club house an even more attractive facility for our community residents, and their children, to enjoy. A bidding process was conducted with reconstruction to begin in October. We hope the project will be completed by early summer, 2016. We should note that we were forced to remove some trees around the clubhouse. These prohibited the sun from drying the sides of the clubhouse, facilitating mold and mildew damage to the walls of our clubhouse.

### Roads Maintenance

We have continued our efforts to repair and improve our roads within the limits of our resources. Recent repairs included replacing several culverts, repairing potholes as needed, adding millings to several roads, performing additional work on 11 roads and tarring and chipping 3 roads. Over time and the continued allocation of funds, the roads will continue to be improved. We did remove speed bumps at the request of first responders to assist their ability to respond to emergency calls within our community. We also added numerous stop signs.

### Miscellaneous

We painted and gave our office a facelift this spring. We also added LED lights to the bus stop parking area. Additional supports were added to the lower row of mailboxes and the community bulletin board.

## Vehicles

Antiques, but Running... for now

The board would like to express its appreciation to the maintenance staff that worked to keep our seven vehicles up and running. We also express our thanks to some of the board members who worked on their own time to repair our vehicles. These efforts have resulted in considerable savings for our community as the labor to repair vehicles constitutes the bulk of the expenses related to vehicle maintenance.

Efforts to maintain the vehicles, especially the Grader which was manufactured in 1972, have been hampered by the age of the vehicles. Parts are not readily available in some instances. All vehicles are running well, although the GMC Mason dump truck needs electrical work. Given the age of the vehicles, we plan to start allocating funds to a saving account for the eventual purchase of replacement vehicles.





## Social and Recreation Programs

By Charles Culver, Committee Chairperson

Hello everyone! I would like to start off by introducing myself. I've lived in the community for ten years with my family. I'm a new board member as well as Pool Director and chair of the Social and Recreation Committee. I also redesigned our website a few months back. If you haven't seen our website recently, [www.marcellakeestates.org](http://www.marcellakeestates.org), I invite you to check it out when you get a free moment. There are a lot of great resources on it and we will try to keep it as up-to-date as possible. Another one of our board members created a Facebook group called "I Live in Marcel Lake Estates" which you can join if you're on Facebook.

The first thing I'd like to discuss is the pool. This summer was my first time managing the pool. It was all new to me and I tried my best to keep it open as much as possible. There were a lot of rainy days with occasional thunderstorms that forced us to close early. We also had a lot of new staff. Once the kinks were worked out, things seemed to go pretty smoothly with very few issues.

On two dates, we had personnel issues. One of those caused us to open late while the other prevented us from opening entirely. I apologize for the inconvenience this may have caused anyone. Statistically, the pool was open almost 99% of the season and I'm proud of that.

Moving on to the Social and Recreation programs, I can say that we have a lot of great things planned. Some of the events are new and some we've done before that were successful. A few of them depend on the clubhouse work finishing on time, so we'll keep our fingers crossed until April.

Here is a quick summary of some of the events and ideas that we are working on bringing to the community:

1. Trunk or Treat;
2. Christmas Decorations Contest;
3. Fishing Derby;
4. Pool Party;

5. Community Yard Sale;
6. Snowman/snow sculpture contest;
7. Treasure/scavenger hunt;
8. Community Garden;
9. Chili Cook-off;
10. Ice Cream Social, fundraising event for the Make-a-Wish Foundation;
11. Thanksgiving Potluck.

We're working hard to make these events possible. We also have a lot of other ideas and we're reviewing their feasibility. To date, the events we've held were a lot of fun. We invite you and your family to join in on the future events!

I should also mention that donations for events and prizes are always appreciated as we try to squeeze every penny out of our budget. Again, we'll keep the website updated as events are planned. We'll also post flyers by the mailboxes and in the gate mailbox.

## Links

**Facebook Group:** <http://tinyurl.com/marcellake>

**Marcel Website:** <http://marcellakeestates.org>



## Administration

By Kim Carrozza, Office Manager

### Proximity Card Clean Up

The office is currently in the process of cleaning up the proximity cards (gate passes). If you have not received a letter with your accounts proximity cards listed, please contact the office at 570-828-8244. All cards that are not registered to a vehicle by November 27, 2015, will be disabled from operating the gate. This is for ALL members/renters. If you have questions on this matter, please contact the office.

### Stop Signs

Several new stop signs have been posted throughout the community; many are being ignored. For the safety of the community, we have a no tolerance policy on this. Fines have and will continue to be issued if you fail to stop at the stop signs. The first stop sign when entering the community, on crossroads Townsend and Lake, has 24-hour video surveillance as of 10/7/15. The footage will be monitored daily and fines will be issued to violators. It's amazing how many people fail to stop at this stop sign.

### Garbage

The garbage area has been monitored daily and we've had a decrease in garbage being dumped outside of the compactor. We would like to thank residents for their co-operation in keeping this area clean and free from illegal dumping. As a reminder, if you have any bulk garbage, there is a dumpster at the maintenance department for a nominal fee. Please call the office with what you would like to dump and you will be provided with the cost. Bulk dumping can only be done on the weekdays unless arrangements have been made with the office. The maintenance area will be closed off during the weekends due to illegal dumping.

### Illegal Entry into the Community

We have been witnessing illegal entry into our community. Please note that if you are caught trying to squeeze through the gate to gain access, you will be issued a fine. If you are not registered with the community, we will file a complaint with the State Police. License plate cameras are located at the gate

entrance and are viewed on a daily basis.

### Social Recreation

We hope you take advantage of the upcoming social recreation events. We have a new social recreation director and he has planned an event for each month. We've had two events over the summer with great turnouts, we wish to continue this! If you would like to help out with social recreation, please contact the office.

### 2016/2017 Dues

Please be aware that payment plans are available if you cannot pay the yearly dues in full come May 1st. We offer a 3, 6, 9 and 12 month plan. Payment plans are started the month of April and due the 15th of each month. Please contact the office and they will help you with arranging this service.

### Winter

Winter is right around the corner, so please remember to keep cars off the roads so that the maintenance department can plow safely. We do understand that some snow debris ends up back in your plowed driveways; this is inevitable. The roads are narrow and we are limited on where the snow can be placed. Please do your part as a community member to help out with this matter. We receive numerous calls during the winter with some residents yelling and tracking down our maintenance department. Remember the maintenance department is usually working overtime allowing you to get safely out of Marcel. We also have two board members that volunteer their time and vehicles to help as well.

### Note

Please remember that the Board of Directors are paying members of this community that put in their own time to help the community and currently have their own jobs, children, and social life. Your help and understanding would be greatly appreciated.

## Burger of the Gods

- 8 ounces chuck, trimmed, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 8 ounces sirloin, trimmed, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

In separate batches, pulse the chuck and the sirloin in a food processor 10 times. Combine the chuck, sirloin, and kosher salt in a large bowl. Form the meat into 5-ounce patties.

Heat a cast iron skillet or griddle over medium-high heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Place the hamburger patties in the pan. For medium burgers, cook the patties for 4 minutes on each side. Flip the burgers only once during cooking.

## Steak Stroganoff

- 3 to 4 pounds beef top sirloin steak, cubed
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) chicken broth
- 1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 can (12 ounces) regular cola
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 envelope onion soup mix
- 1 to 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 envelopes country gravy mix
- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream
- Hot cooked noodles

In a 5-qt. slow cooker, combine the first nine ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours or until beef is tender.

With a slotted spoon, remove beef and mushrooms. Place gravy mix in a large saucepan; gradually whisk in cooking liquid. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in sour cream. Add beef and mushrooms to the gravy. Serve with noodles.

## Classic Minestrone

- 2 tablespoon(s) olive oil, plus more for serving
- 1 large onion, chopped
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 2 clove(s) (large) garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoon(s) tomato paste
- 4 carrots, peeled and sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 2 stalk(s) celery, sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 russet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 6 sprig(s) fresh thyme (optional)
- 1/2 head(s) (small) savoy cabbage, cored, quartered, and cut into 1-inch-thick strips
- 1 cup(s) ditalini pasta
- 1 can(s) (15 1/2-ounce) white beans, rinsed
- 2 cup(s) baby spinach
- Parmesan cheese and crusty bread, for serving
- Crusty bread, for serving

Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, season with 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until very tender, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the tomato paste and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.

Add the carrots, celery, potato, thyme (if using), and 8 cups water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Add the cabbage and simmer until the vegetables are tender, 10 to 12 minutes more.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to package directions.

Discard the thyme. Stir the pasta and beans into the soup and cook until the beans are heated through, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and add the spinach, folding until beginning to wilt. Serve with additional olive oil, Parmesan and crusty bread, if desired.