

July 2026
A Little Slice of Heaven

Elbow Lake Chatter

Photo Courtesy: Susan Neighbors

..... Summer's Starting to Sizzle!

The docks are back in the water, the smell of sunscreen is in the air, and the hum of boat motors is the soundtrack we've all been waiting for. Summer at the lake is what the whole year builds toward, and we can't wait to share it with all of you. Welcome back!

Our next ELCOA Board Meeting of the season is on **July 4th**. Please join us at the **Boat Launch** at **10:00AM** to discuss our local happenings. These board meetings are open to the public, and all are encouraged to join.

Stick around after the meeting to register for the boat parade if you're participating. Flares will also be for sale leading up to the night's festivities!

You Need to Know

Sheriff

989-539-7166

Fire Department

989-539-7145

Oxygen

Mary Ann Wood
10385 N. Athey Ave.
989-274-4315

Frank DeVuono
9982 South Shore
586-482-0907

Emergency Walkie-Talkies Oxygen and AED

Charlie and Deb Smith
9895 Toohy Trail
989-560-5811
989-424-8633

The 2026 Boat Parade theme is



THE PARADE IS

8 pm, Saturday, July 4th

Cash prizes for the top four entries.

And, as always, it's free to enter and you do not have to be a member of ELCOA to participate and win in ANY of ELCOA-sponsored events.

11 am to Noon: Boat Registration and Flare Sale at Boat Launch or pick up no. at Shirley Miller's cottage, just W of the Boat Launch.

Registration involves giving your name and getting a number to display on your boat so judges can vote for you.

**You already have Patriotic stuff from the Golf Cart Parade . . . Decorate your boat with it and
JOIN THE PARADE!!!!**

2026 Dates to Remember

- **July 4th**
 - Board Meeting, 10:00AM
 - Parade Registration, Flare Sales, 11:00AM
 - Boat Parade, 8:00PM
- **August 1st**
 - Annual Meeting, 10:00AM
 - Annual Picnic, 12:00PM
- **August 2nd**
 - Board Meeting, 10:00AM
- **September 5th**
 - Board Meeting, 10:00AM
- **October 10th**
 - Board Meeting, 10:AM
 - Hayride Event (TBA on Time)

Volunteers Needed

Got an hour of spare time? Please consider volunteering for future events. Whether you help organize and run games for the kids, judge for our exciting chili cook-off competition, or lend an extra hand cleaning up the boat launch and beach, your efforts will be greatly appreciated by the community. Stay tuned for upcoming opportunities!

Lake Spraying Update

Our lake sprayer, Jeff, has informed us that the lake will now be sprayed on July 7th, 2026 (previously June 30th). He was forced to reschedule due to medical reasons.

Floating Dock Project

ELCOA President Mark Scott has updated that he no longer has free labor for the floating dock project. There is currently \$150 set aside for this project, but it is estimated to cost around \$800. Please reach out to Mark if you'd like to volunteer time or resources towards completing the floating dock.

Join the Chatter!

Elbow Lake Chatter is the official voice of ELCOA. We invite you to send local news, comments, ideas, or photos to: elbowlakecoa@gmail.com
Facebook page: **Elbow Lake Community Page**
ELCOA webpage: www.elbowlakeinfo.wordpress.com

Independence Day Celebrations!

11AM at Boat Launch: Flare Sales and pre-registration for Boat Parade will begin after the ELCOA Board Meeting completes; stop and get a number for your boat to participate in the contest!

8PM Boat Parade: We can't wait to see how everyone has decorated their boats for the USA's 250th birthday.

Dusk: The Flare Boat will circle the lake twice at dusk to signal our tradition of lighting flares around the lake. A big shout out and thank you to Kevin Pillon for volunteering to pull the Flare Boat this year. There will also be fireworks organized and provided by Mike & April Corrias and friend Roger later in the evening.

Please refrain from setting off fireworks until the flare boat has docked to avoid injury to the driver



Thanks to our local supporters!



Trout Lake Dam Faces Possible Removal



Rick Brewer/WCMU

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is recommending the removal of the Trout Lake dam in the Gladwin Field Trial Area after a 2024 inspection by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy found it to be in poor condition.

The dam was built in 1961 to create a trout fishing reservoir, but the DNR later discovered the lake heats up too much in summer months to support trout, making the original purpose impractical. DNR fishery unit supervisor Jeffrey Jolley explained that the dam's wooden boards, used to control water depth, have begun to rot beyond their engineered lifespan. The DNR has been actively drawing the lake down since April to relieve pressure on those deteriorating boards and allow for a full inspection later this summer, after which a final decision will be made.

If removed, the lake would revert to a small creek, though the DNR noted that active beaver populations in the area may naturally restore some water. Ecologically, removing the dam could benefit the stream by restoring cold-water habitat suitable for trout and native vegetation.

The financial picture is also a major factor. Even minor repairs could run \$60,000 to \$80,000, while a full dam removal could cost between \$50,000 and \$150,000 and a complete rehabilitation with ongoing maintenance could approach millions of dollars. Jolley noted the DNR currently lacks funding for either option.

Community response has been strong. Residents have launched a "Save Trout Lake!" Facebook group, gathered over 2,000 petition signatures, and are working with state legislators to find a path forward. Some are exploring the creation of a nonprofit to raise private funds for dam maintenance, pointing to a similar grassroots effort that saved the Cornwall dam in northern Michigan through a \$200,000 community fundraiser supplemented by DNR fish and game license revenue.

ACTIVITIES



*Congratulations to our winners of the annual Memorial Day Parade Contest!
1st Place: Jake Madell, 2nd Place: Sally Rouse, 3rd Place: Patrick Neighbors*

Memorial Day Weekend's Amazing Turnout!

There were over 30 vehicles registered for the Memorial Day Parade, all decorated in their finest Red, White, and Blue. ELCOA President Mark Scott held a small speech to give tribute to the veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country before the parade began. The parade proceeded around the lake and up N. Athey and Northwoods Trail before returning to the Boat Launch. Following the parade, the community enjoyed a hot dog lunch provided by Grill Master Mike. Followed by the award ceremony for the winners of the parade competition for best decorations. More photos of the day are provided on the next page!

ACTIVITIES



ACTIVITIES



SUMMARY OF MINUTES FROM ELCOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

ELCOA Meeting Minutes from Saturday, May 23, 2026

Location: Boat Launch

Present: Mark Scott, Tonya Patterson, Sally Rouse, Eric Rouse, Frank DeVuono, Tyler Hay, Marty Neighbors

Absent: Jonathan Kelly, Donnie Patterson, Fred VandDekerhove, John Krieger, Shirley Miller, Lisa Wick, Ed HenriHenri

Guests: Mary Ann Wood, Deb Smith

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by President Mark Scott.

Minutes: Sally Rouse read the minutes from Saturday, April 25, 2026. Frank accepted a motion to approve with the spelling correction noted by Sally and Marty seconded. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Jonathan missed the meeting and no report was provided.

Membership Report: Tonya indicated that 17 membership forms have been submitted so far. Of those forms, \$115.00 has been designated for the fish fund and \$115.00 for the gravel fund. She indicated we had about 80 members last year. Tonya will set up a membership table at the Memorial Day Parade.

Reporting of committee members:

Neighborhood Watch: Frank indicated nothing really to report, other than Joel's house is now on a foundation block and Donna and Tom are about ready to start construction of their new home. There was a bunch of wood illegally dumped at the boat launch property line. Mark indicated the Maryann Wood should have called the police or the blight officer regarding the incident. Mark also reminded everyone at the meeting the board does not control the boat launch and we need to keep the discussions at the meetings to what they can control.

Facebook: There were no updates on the website or Facebook. Tyler indicated that a newsletter may be released before July 4th .

Boat Parade: No update. Shirley Miller was not in attendance.

Memorial Day Parade: Mark indicated that registration would begin around noon.

Annual Picnic: No volunteers to chair. No further discussion.

Hay Ride: Sally and Tonya to chair the hayride. Sally to look into the state of Michigan raffle license application.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES FROM ELCOA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING - *continued*

Old Business: Marty mentioned the bill for the boat launch light pole has not been paid for months now, as the bill is being emailed to a spam folder. The bill is in Franklin Townships name, so only personal from the township can speak to Consumers Energy. Marty calculated that the cost for the light pole is roughly \$2.37 a day. Marty said he would contact John and Shelly to see who is paying for this light. He will report back to the board at the next meeting.

New Business: Mark indicated he no longer has free labor for the floating dock project. There are no additional funds for this project. If someone else wants to take this on, they can. There is \$150.00 in the kitty for material. He said the estimated the material would cost about \$800.00.

Mark informed the group that Mike and April's Corrias' friend Roger puts on the boat launch firework show each year. It typically ranges to about \$2/\$3k out of Roger's own money. Donations are being accepted to offset his expense. You can give your donation to April or Mike.

Subdivision Yard Sale: Subdivision sale is scheduled for today and tomorrow.

Sub Crawl: Tonya is moving forward with the arrangements for the sub crawl. More information to follow. The event is not supported by the board.

Sally made a motion to give Tyler free membership for the use of his electricity for ELCOA events. Donnie seconded. Motion approved.

Deb asked if Charlie should still order the porta johns thru Lil Willies. The group was receptive to Charlie continuing to do this and providing the water samples for the lake.

Next meeting will be July 4th, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the boat launch.

A motion was made to adjourn at 10:53 a.m. by Tyler and seconded by Eric. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by Sally Rouse, Secretary for ELCOA

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR 2026

ELCOA OFFICERS

President

Mark Scott

586-496-3800

mascott7676@gmail.com

Vice President

Donnie Patterson

517-375-2500

dpatterson@ditchwitchmi.com

Secretary

Sally Rouse

586-709-0401

sallykaufman2005@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Jonathan Kelly

734-624-8299

kellyj734@gmail.com

Membership

Tonya Patterson

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ELCOA DIRECTORS

Fred VanDekerhove

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Marty Neighbors

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Shirley Miller

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Ed Henri

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COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Community News/Facebook Administrator

Deb Smith

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Community Support Person

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Annual Picnic

Mary Ann Wood

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Shirley Miller

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Hayride

Lisa Wick 810-288-9719

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Newsletter/Website

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haytyler7@gmail.com

Water Testing

Charlie Smith

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kai538@yahoo.com

Facebook Administrator

Mark Scott

586-496-3800

mascott7676@gmail.com

Lake Weeds Treatment

Mary Ann Wood

989-274-4315

woodmaryann46@gmail.com

Fish Planting/Neighborhood Watch

Frank DeVuono

586-482-0907

fjdevuono@gmail.com

ELOCA Membership for 2026-2027

(Yearly Membership runs from August 2026 through July 2027)

Membership dues \$60.00

NAME: _____

ELBOW LAKE ADDRESS: _____

HOME ADDRESS, if different: _____

PHONE: _____ **OR** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

Interested in Charing: ___ Annual Picnic ___ Hayride ___ Golf Cart/ATV Parade Interested in
volunteering for: ___ Annual Picnic ___ Hayride ___ Golf Cart/ATV Parade ___ Sub Crawl (new
event)

Donations for Fish Fund \$ _____ Donations for Boat Launch Gravel \$ _____

(If you are donating for the fish fund or boat launch gravel, clearly specify above how much to
go to either fund and you can write one check for membership and your donation total.)

- Membership dues must be paid on or before the Annual Meeting/Picnic to vote
- Dues received by **July 10, 2026** will qualify for the **"Early Bird Drawing"** Prize of \$100.00
(Winner announced at the Annual Meeting)

Please send this Membership form and check for \$ 60.00 PAYABLE to ELCOA to:

Tonya Patterson
3507 Hogback Rd
Fowlerville, MI 48836

Office use only Ch# _____ Cash _____ Date Rec: _____