

Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Summer 2015 Newsletter

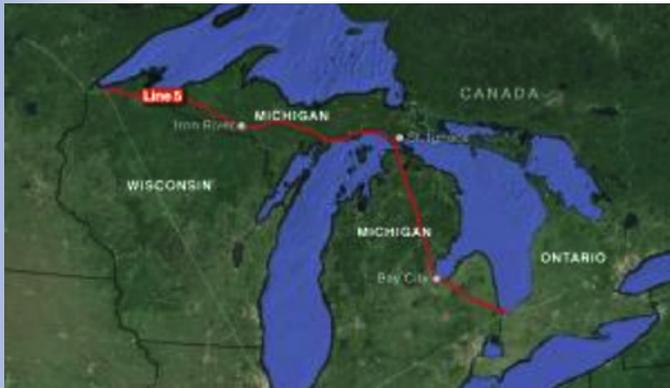


Article contributors:

Gary Rentrop, Kimberly Dowd, Franz Neubrecht, Carolyn Sutherland, George Smolak, Dick Selvala

Enbridge Pipeline Straits of Mackinac

Two 20 inch pipelines lie on the bottom of the Straits carrying crude oil from the Canadian west to a refinery located in Sarnia, Canada. The pipelines are owned by Enbridge, Inc. and every day approximately 23 million gallons of oil flow through the lines. The line are 62 years old. These pipelines are identified as "line 5."



Line 5 has transported crude oil across the Straits without incident. Enbridge maintains these lines can last forever if properly inspected and maintained. However a number of issues have come to light which causes concerns about the possible risk line 5 poses to the Strait, Lake Michigan, and Lake Huron. These issues include:

- In 2010 an Enbridge line ruptured spilling 1,100,000 gal. of heavy crude oil into the Kalamazoo River. Once the alarm sounded it was 18 hours before the line was shut down. The rupture contaminated a 25 mile stretch of the river. Today approximately 500,000 gal of crude oil are on the bottom of the river. This line was transporting diluted bitumen (dilbit). Dilbit is a sinker, unlike other petroleum product which float, making the clean up very difficult. In the case of the Straits, the lines are at depth of 100 to 270 feet deep. Enbridge learned valuable lessons from this spill from which they assure such a catastrophe as this would not happen with line 5.
- Pipelines in the U.S. are regulated by the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Material Safety Administration (PHMSA). PHMSA regulations preempt state and local regulatory control over pipelines. At a Pipeline Symposium put on by Tip of the Mitt on June 25, 2014 a PHMSA representative spoke identifying what PHMSA does and does not do:
 - It does not inspect pipelines. It relies upon paper work provided by the companies. They look at their programs for maintenance and inspection.
 - They don't approve pipelines.
 - They focus on companies that need attention, Enbridge is not such a company.
 - PHMSA is underfunded and understaffed.

- They do not regulate the change in product going through the line. Dilbit can be transported in the line without prior approval.
- They do not approve pressure increases in the line. Higher pressures are needed to transport Dilbit. For now Dilbit is not in line 5, we are told.
- Line 5 has had a recent increase in the volume and pressure of product moving through the line.
- Enbridge safety record: Apart from the Kalamazoo River spill, Enbridge's own record states they have had 804 spills between 1999 and 2010.
- The University of Michigan's Graham Institute did a modeling of the impacted areas if a spill were to occur in the Straits. In a spill far less in volume than the Kalamazoo River, the spill would reach out into Lake Michigan, the islands around Beaver Island, down to Alpena. Mackinac Island would be seriously impacted if the water supply contaminated. This model is very interesting and can be viewed at <http://graham.umich.edu/media/files/mackinac-report.pdf> and <http://graham.umich.edu/water/news/mackinac-straits-contaminant-scenarios>.
- Enbridge's environmental response company is located in St Ignace. They maintain 300 ft of boom at St Ignace, can get another 400ft from Indian River, 4200 ft from Cheboygan, 16,000 ft from the Sault. If a spill was to occur when the Straits were ice covered, it would create difficult clean up operations.

A state task force was formed in 2014 chaired by DEQ Director Dan Wyant and the Attorney General Bill Scheutte. The report was not available at the time this newsletter was prepared but is expected out shortly.

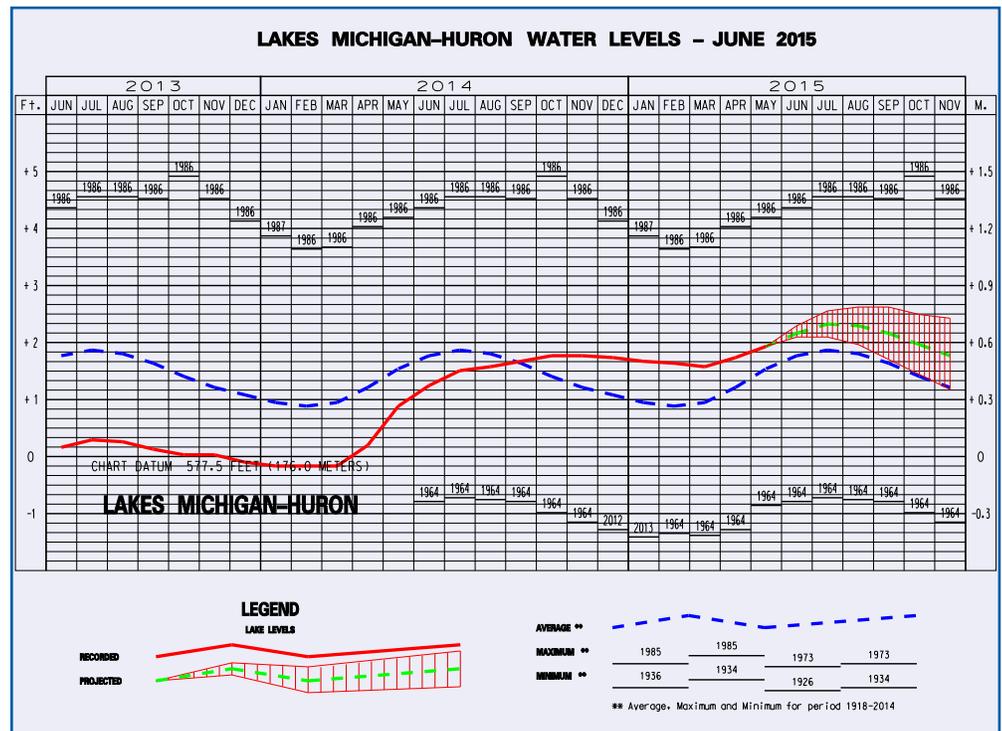
For those of you who wish to know more about line 5 the following link provides an excellent summary prepared by Elizabeth Brackett an investigative reporter out of Chicago. The oil dispersion model from a hypothetical release prepared by the University of Michigan you will find particularly of interest.

<http://chicagotonight.wttw.com/2015/06/11/straits-mackinac-pipeline>



Lakes Michigan-Huron Water Levels June 2015

The water level of lakes Michigan-Huron have been on the rise due to the increased duration of winter ice, plentiful spring rains in 2014, and some cooler summer weather. The recorded water level increase for June 2014 was near 1.5 feet, and the projected water level increase for 2015 is roughly 2.5 feet with a maximum rise in June 2015 reaching 3.0 feet, according to the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers. This would be good news for commercial shipping as heavier loads could be carried by the lake freighters, thereby eliminating additional trips to the same location. Pleasure boat marina operators may be spared further expenses associated with harbor dredging. During the period from 1918 to 2013, the highest water level of the lakes Michigan-Huron was in 1985, and the lowest was observed during 1926.



There has been some direct human intervention with subsequent consequences on the lakes Michigan-Huron, due to dredging in the St. Clair River. A 150 year timeline from 1865 to 2014 clearly shows that lakes Michigan-Huron water levels have been trending downward, while Lake Erie and the St. Clair River have maintained their long term average highs. Significant water level losses from lakes Michigan-Huron can be in part due to: sand and gravel mining in the St. Clair River in the early 1900's, dredging in the St. Clair River between 1933 and 1936 to a depth of 25 feet, and construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1956, which included the dredging of the shipping channels to a depth of 27 feet. It is theorized that dredging has destabilized the natural lake and river bottoms and left them more vulnerable to erosion. Unfortunately, that dredging

in the St. Clair River has grown to a depth of 60 feet-far beyond the 27 foot depth for shipping due to soil erosion of the riverbed. These human-induced changes may have dramatically increased the volume of water loss from lakes Michigan-Huron.

There obviously is a natural flux that occurs in lake water levels due in part to climate change, winter ice formation, higher rainfall in the spring, and increased evaporation due to warmer summer temperatures. These environmental changes, coupled with human intervention such as dredging, can cause an increase or decrease in the water levels of the Great Lakes. Being good stewards of the Great Lake water levels is a multifaceted and complex proposition requiring constant vigilance from all of the concerned stakeholders.

Last Standing, Original Ottawa Home on Lamkin Road is Being Preserved

Thanks to a group of interested community members, the last standing, unoccupied, original Ottawa home on Lamkin Road is being preserved. Built in 1859 by the King family, the home is located in what was originally the center of Middle Village, a vibrant Ottawa fishing community during the 1700-1800's.

Banding together in December 2014, the group was able to purchase the home and establish 501c3 status with plans to properly restore the home, offer continual preservation, and an eventual hands-on history experience for visitors and resident alike wishing to learn more about the Ottawa history of Middle Village.

The mission of The King House Association is to "properly restore and continually preserve the King House with eventual plans for a visual history museum of the area through photographs and

written word telling the history of Middle Village (Good Hart).

The association's first priority is raising \$40,000 for the purchase (an 18-month land contract is in place to complete the transaction). Currently over \$20,000 has been raised. The association then has a three year operational budget goal of \$60,000 to be used for preservation. The home's roof, windows, doors, floors, logs and chinking will be restored to the original state.

The goal is to reach the \$100,000 mark by December, 2015. Tax-free contributions can be made to The King House and mailed to P.O. Box 942, Good Hart, Michigan 49737. Additional information may be found at facebook.com/kinghouseassociation <<http://facebook.com/kinghouseassociation>>.

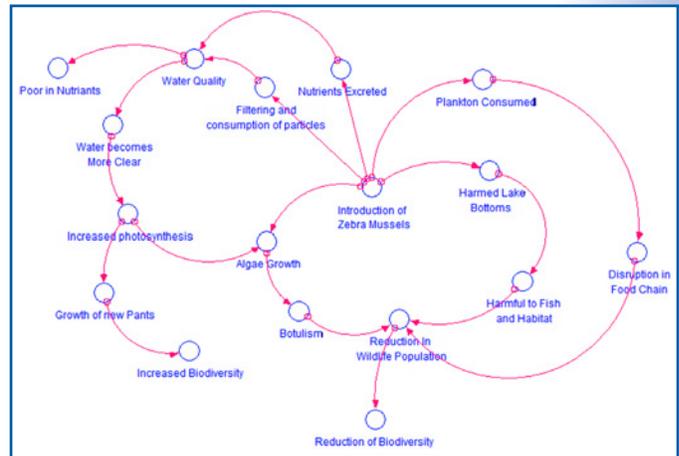
Ecology of the Great Lakes

The ecology of the Great Lakes is changing, no doubt, in ways that are permanent. The Great Lakes ecosystem has been damaged by more than 180 invasive and non-native species—species such as the zebra mussel, quagga mussel, round goby, and sea lamprey. This article, Part I, will in summary form, identify some but not all of the reasons for the changes that we see today. Part II, in a subsequent newsletter, will address adverse environmental conditions that may be coming.

Sea Lamprey: This species is mentioned because it is one of the first noted introductions of an invasive species, and is an example of the permanent impact upon the Great Lakes from invasives. The first recorded observation of a sea lamprey in the Great Lakes was in 1835. The sea lamprey attaches to fish with its suction cup mouth, then digs its teeth into the flesh for grip. Once securely attached, sea lampreys rasp through the fish scales and feed on the body fluids of the fish. The fish generally die from the loss of fluids or infection. Sea lampreys entered the Great Lakes through improvements to the Welland Canal. Before the sea lampreys appeared, 15 million pounds of lake trout in the upper Great Lakes were harvested each year. By the early 1960s, the catch had dropped dramatically to approximately 300,000 pounds per year. Sea lampreys have been controlled (though poisons, barriers in streams, traps and pheromones), but not extinguished. The sea lamprey is still here. Aggressive measures of control must be continually taken or the Sea Lamprey will again rebound in large numbers.



Zebra and Quagga Mussels: The shells of these mussels are what you see when walking on the beach—something we do not remember seeing 10 years ago. These mussels entered the Great Lakes in the ballast of ships coming through the St. Lawrence Seaway. The zebra mussels came first, then the quagga mussels. The zebra mussel thrives in shallow waters while the quagga can thrive in deeper waters. The zebra mussel is no longer the dominant mussel. The impact of these mussels is more than just an unsightly cluttering of beaches. The mussels are believed to be a link in what has caused outbreaks of botulism toxin which is poisoning sea and shore birds. They filter out *Diporeia*, the major food source for many fish. Measurement has shown a significant loss of *Diporeia* in the Great Lakes which, if it continues, will threaten the survival of many Great Lakes fish. The die off of the alewife, a primary food for salmon, is believed to be due to the loss of *Diporeia* food for the alewife. The excrement from these



mussels is thought to serve as a fertilizer promoting the growth of *Cladophora* algae discussed in this article. The ecological impact of these mussels is nicely illustrated on the Stella Mode (diagram above).

Cladophora Algae

The good news is that *Cladophora* is a native algae. The bad news is that it's on "steroids," creates an ugly mess on our beaches and stinks when it rots. Mats of this algae lie on the bottom of the lakes and are believed to create an anaerobic condition which causes naturally occurring botulism to produce the toxin which is killing sea and shore birds. Lake Erie, which had a reversal of poor lake conditions, now is experiencing massive algal blooms. These blooms caused a shutdown of a municipal water supply because of concerns of the contamination from these blooms. These blooms can produce a toxin related to what is called "blue green algae." The cause of these outbreaks is believed to be due to the nutrient, phosphorus, entering the water from the fertilization of corn crops in the Maumee River Basin. The algae we have seen on Lake Michigan, when the water levels were lower, were likely caused by warmer water, less ice, low lake levels, and resulting sunlight.

Round Goby

This is a small bottom fish with large jaws of teeth—not too pretty, but good for crushing mussel shells. This fish was introduced into the Great Lakes from central Eurasia, via the ballast water of ocean going vessels. It will eat other small fish and the eggs of larger fish. The goby is also believed to be part of the cycle that brings the botulism toxin to the sea and shore birds. The cycle is believed to be:

1. *Cladophora* algae create a mat on the floor of the lake, creating an anaerobic condition that causes naturally occurring botulism to produce botulism toxin.
2. The zebra and quagga mussels ingest this toxin as they filter water. The mussels are not affected by the toxin.
3. The round goby eats the mussels and becomes ill or dies.
4. The goby is eaten from the surface or at depth by a migrating sea bird, causing the death of the bird, and shore birds that eat the maggots from the dead sea birds that float ashore may also die. However, the round goby has a redeeming value. It eats large quantities of zebra and quagga mussels.

Avian Flu, Avian Botulism

At the time of this writing, more than 33 million ducks, chickens, and turkeys across twelve states have lost their lives since December due to H5N2, a strain of Avian Flu. Some of these birds have died from the virus, while others have been euthanized to prevent spread of the virus. H5N2 is especially fast-moving, killing ninety percent of a flock within 48 hours. Theories as to how the virus has spread so quickly include transmission, whether intentional or unintentional, by travelling humans as well as by migrating wild birds.

H5N2 has been found in Wisconsin, just across Lake Michigan from us. While nearly all Wisconsin deaths occurred on bird/egg farms, in early May, a migrating wild snowy owl was discovered to have died from the virus. This owl was found in Oconto County, near Green Bay. H5N2 has also been reported in Indiana, as well as in Ontario, Canada. Thus far these are the only areas reported near the Great Lakes.

Readers may recall that ECLA has been active in monitoring for bird die-offs due to Avian Botulism. This monitoring takes place during the fall months, when die-offs due to Botulism Type E are most common. Now, with the new health threat posed by H5N2, lakefront property owners will want to be vigilant about sick and dead waterfowl all summer.

If you find a dead bird during the summer:

Individual sick or dead waterfowl should be reported to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Disease Lab (DNR) at 517-336-5030 or via a website reporting form at www.michigandnr.com/diseasedwildlifereporting/disease_obsreport.asp. Should a die-off (more than six birds found sick or dead within a short time period) be found, the DNR will laboratory test the birds and should be immediately notified at 517-336-5030 (during business hours) or 1-800-292-7800 (after hours).

If you find a dead bird during the fall:

Contact Dan Myers at the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council (231.347.1181 or dan@watershedcouncil.org).

Any dead or sick birds should be handled with care, using gloved hands, and contact with pets and children should be avoided.

If you are interested in being a volunteer beach monitor, (which requires you to walk a section of Lake Michigan shoreline weekly during the fall months) contact Dan Myers at the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council (231.347.1181 or dan@watershedcouncil.org).

Avian Flu vs Avian Botulism

Avian Flu is an influenza virus that afflicts primarily birds.

Avian Botulism is best described in an article by Mark Breederland of the Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Sea Grant (copied here from http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/avian_botulism_and_the_great_lakes):

“Avian botulism is a food poisoning whereby waterfowl ingest a toxin which is produced by the naturally occurring rod-shaped bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. Typically, these native bacteria live in a highly resistant spore stage and are of no impact to fish and wildlife; however, under the right



circumstances (usually anaerobic conditions), the bacteria will germinate, produce and make bio-available one of nature's most potent toxicants. The toxin causes muscular paralysis. Often the birds are unable to hold their head up and may drown or die from respiratory failure. Avian botulism is also known as limberneck, due to the bird's inability to hold up its head.

“While small invertebrates (often maggots) are not impacted by the toxin, they often serve to pass the toxin up the food chain. A rotting carcass that has the botulism toxin in it and is decomposing along the shore can often be a source for maggots, and other scavenging birds such as gulls can possibly get botulism. This maggot-cycle is particularly important for type C botulism.

“What is type C botulism vs. type E botulism?”

“Type C avian botulism is the neuromuscular disease which typically affects dabbling ducks, and possibly other shorebirds, that forage in the mud in both inland and Great Lake coastlines (see the poster from [Michigan Sea Grant—Dabblers & Divers: Great Lakes Waterfowl!](#)) and eat invertebrates directly. Type C impacts are felt in both inland lake and pond environments as well as in the Great Lakes shorelines.

“Type E avian botulism usually impacts diver ducks in the Great Lakes where they dive deep and eat fish/mussels. Avian botulism outbreaks (type E) have occurred, with increased frequency in Lake Michigan along the northwest Michigan region since 2006, typically during the September–October–November time frame.

“The mallard dabbling duck is the most abundant local duck in the Grand Traverse Bay region with strong population numbers and is the single species that was affected in the recent outbreak confirmed by the DNR. It is doubtful that a significant type C botulism outbreak would seriously impact population numbers of this species.

“However, diving duck species such as common loons are a noteworthy species that have been impacted by type E botulism over a recent number of years. Common loons are a species of special concern in Michigan, and the full impact of the botulism kills are not known and a possible concern for loon population impacts in North America.”

An additional detailed description of Avian Botulism, along with charts of bird types affected, can be found at http://www.nwhc.usgs.gov/publications/field_manual/chapter_38.pdf.

Road Conditions and Repair Funding

Everyone agrees that the roads in Michigan are not in good condition. After the recent rejection of Proposal A, which was going to help in road funding, Lansing is looking for alternative ways to make much-needed improvements. There will be some time however before a permanent solution is found.

The Emmet County Road Commission developed a grading system from 1 to 10, with 10 being the best. The conditions of county roads have mixed ratings and they are as follows:

Local (township) roads: improved from 5.43 in 2005 to 6.55 in 2015

Primary (county) roads: deteriorated from 5.82 in 2005 to 4.76 in 2015

This indicates that the local roads are in much better shape than the primary roads, which experience much higher traffic volume than the local roads. In ECLA Townships rating of local roads is as follows: Cross Village / 6.9, Readmond / 7.87, Friendship / 6.18 and West Traverse / 7.41. At the same time ratings of primary (county) roads are: State Road – 3 (South of Cross Village to Lacount Road), Robinson Road – 3 and 4, Middle Road – 9 (recently redone) and Stutsmanville Road E. of State Road 4 (for the past several years Friendship Township has been concentrating on improving primary road—Stutsmanville Road). Lake Shore Drive N. of M-119 in Cross Village / 3 and 4. Most of these roads did not have major rebuilding done for over 50 years and today's condition of State and Robinson Roads reached the point of being unsafe.

Roads which are in relatively good condition, are fixed first. This is due primarily to an interesting and controversial approach in prioritizing road repairs/rebuilding. Roads that are in relatively good condition are repaired ahead of those which have low grade and desperately need rebuilding. This is primarily due to the tremendous difference in cost. For example, the cost per mile to reconstruct a road such



as Levering Road (last year) was between \$240,000 and \$320,000 per mile. To do asphalt wedging of the rest of Levering Road from State Road is around \$45,000 per mile and repairing road rated 7 is \$3,100.

According to the Road Commission it would definitely help to have the townships share primary road repair expenses with the county. Without a funding increase from the State, the Road Commission may not be able to help ECLA townships at all on some road improvements. This is also due to the fact that the county currently helps 8 of the poorest 16 townships with a small stipend in funding road repairs and none of the ECLA Townships are in that category.

Without the townships help, the county will not be able to repair/rebuild ECLA's territory primary roads soon. While ECLA townships continue to collect road millage money (1% except West Travers .7%) and local roads are in a relatively good shape when primary/county roads are deteriorating it makes a lot of sense for townships to divert some of that money to county and fund repairs of primary roads. Some of this is already done: Stutsmanville Road in Friendship and this year's edging of Levering Road in Cross Village. ECLA is recommending that its members continue urging Township Boards to do so. Joint effort of repairing State Rd. which runs through all of ECLA Townships would be a great example of wisely spending road millage money. Urging Road Commission and perhaps County Board to place State and Robinson Roads toward the top of priorities may help also.

Cherry Capital

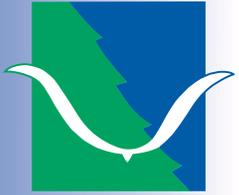
Perhaps some of you have been as frustrated with satellite internet service as I and my wife had been. We work through a server in our office downstate. With satellite internet service, when we typed a letter it took a couple of seconds—sometimes longer—before the letter showed on our computer screens. Last summer, we went for a week with hit and miss satellite service. After many frustrating calls to India, things did get slightly better. But enough was enough. At the suggestion of Gene Reck, supervisor for Cross Village Township, we turned to Cherry Capital. Because Cherry Capital requires line of sight for its signal, we did not think we could get service. However, Tim Malone from Cherry Capital was able to obtain a signal from their tower at Sturgeon Bay to our neighbors on a point, and from their home to our home. The difference was astounding:

1. The speed of service is comparable to what we have at our down-state home with Comcast. Speed—which is the time it takes for a signal to go out and come back,

e.g. you type a letter and it shows on your computer screen—is measured in “pings.” The lower the number the better. We went from 1200 pings to around 40 pings.

2. There is no limit on usage with Cherry Capital. With the satellite provider we had the highest usage allowance available because of our business. When we exceeded our usage, the satellite service simply slowed down to unusable. That got our attention. This does not happen with Cherry Capital. I have even been watching movies—unheard of with the satellite provider.
3. \$45 per month when paid on an annual basis, otherwise \$50 per month.
4. If we need help, no more calls to India!

It's not 100% perfect, but almost. At times, the signal to the server is briefly disconnected, but is reconnected in about 30 seconds. All in all, Cherry Capital has made operating remotely a pleasure.



Emmet County Lakeshore Association

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In unity, there is strength

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Kasischke To Discuss 1996 Mt Everest Tragedy

Come to the Emmet County Lake Shore Association (ECLA) Annual Luncheon Meeting at Birchwood Farms Golf and CC on Friday August 14, 2015 .

Local resident Lou Kasischke will discuss the 1996 Mt Everest tragedy as described in his recently authored and published book "After the Wind." This book chronicles the tragic event from the perspective of the

author who was a survivor of that fateful climb of the world's highest mountain.

This luncheon event will start at 11:00 a.m. with beverages followed by lunch at 12:00 noon. Tickets are \$15. Call Mandi at 231-373-0754 for reservations. Non-members in attendance will be invited to join the Association with a no-cost membership for the first year.

Your membership in Emmet County Lakeshore Association gives special benefits with Blarney Castle for propane. Just tell them you are a member of ECLA.

- Lock in Price of \$1.699/gallon thru March 31, 2016.
- First Fill price for new customers— Please call the Cheboygan Office to sign up (231-627-7109).
- Free Tank Set and Safety Test.
- Courtesy Fill and Will Call Programs Available.
- Prompt Pay Discount of 1.5% if paid within 10 days by cash or check.

Pump Alarm Program available to help homeowners monitor their homes. The Cheboygan Office can assist with setting anyone up who is interested in the program.

Emmet County Lakeshore Association

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www.emmetcountylakeshore.org

Emmet County Lakeshore Association 44th Annual Business Meeting and Presentation Friday | August 14th 2015

Beginning at 11:30 a.m. | Lunch will be served at 12:00 Noon
BIRCHWOOD FARMS GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB
Main Clubhouse | 600 Birchwood Drive | Harbor Springs

For more information, please contact **Mandi Garber**
at (231) 373-0754 or ecla@emmetcountylakeshore.org.
Return form with payment to: **ECLA, P.O. Box 277, Harbor Springs, MI 49740**

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