

## MiCorps Presentation – Jean Roth 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference 2008

Good Afternoon– my name is Jean Roth, I'm here today representing my lake community, Chain Lake in Iosco County, we are in the North East side of the state on the edge of the Huron National Forest. I hope to relate to you all how the CLMP helped our little lake community pull together for the common good of the lake, the environment, and our safety. It made me the “expert” on the lake, even tho' I know I am not an expert by any stretch of the imagination, but because I am the lake monitor, and conduct the testing for CLMP on our lake, people will think twice, before they do anything harmful to the lake. The CLMP definitely made the lake community take notice of what they do in regard to the health and safe use of the lake.

I am basing my presentation on the four questions that were asked of the possible presenters.

### 1. What are your successes?

Our lake has been involved in the water clarity (Secchi) and Spring and Summer Phosphorus tests thru the CLMP since 1997. Our lake ended up in the CLMP because some of the residents wanted to have the lake dredged. – I spoke up at the meeting and suggested that we find out first if something was actually wrong before doing something radical like dredging. That is how I became the volunteer monitor for our lake. As a result of the 11 years we have been in the CLMP the tests showed that our lake was not changed or changing all that much. That it was a healthy lake, and that there wasn't really any need to dredge.

There was a problem, at the public beach. Watercraft were going in amongst the swimmers, which presented a danger to the people in the water. To solve that problem the association contacted the agencies who had the jurisdiction over the property to see if buoys could be placed in the water, designating the swimming area. We obtained the proper permits, found out the correct markings needed for the buoys and made them out of PVC . Since then there have been no complaints, and the swimmers are safe and the watercraft stay out of the marked area. Also, the owners of the PWC's have voluntarily limited their use of the PWC's on the lake – they operate them from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. the lake quiets down and residents or visitors enjoy their slow cruises or they go fishing.

We were the host lake for the local area school. Hale High School students from the biology or the advanced chemistry classes and their teacher would have field trips to our lake or to two other near by streams. The students would conduct various tests and gather micro-invertebrates.. They would take the micro-invertebrates and all test results of their findings back to the school and work up a report about what they found, to determine if that lake or stream was healthy. We would always be invited to the school to hear the reports about the health of the streams or lake. We as the host lake, interacted with the students on each field trip. And, we always fed them a nice lunch. It gave the students and us a real sense of community. They learned that we cared about the waters,

be they streams or lakes, and that we cared about them as well. All the students we met had college in mind for their futures. They were a great bunch of kids and it was wonderful working with them.

We were involved in this project for four years.

## 2. What Challenges are you facing?

It seems as tho' everyone has their own agenda. Some want all of the weeds in the entire lake removed. Some want all, of their waterfront to become a pristine sandy beach. Some want certain type of fish removed. Some want certain types of fish put in. Our lake area is 72.5 acres of water – the bottom is a fibrous peat, marl, pulpy peat, and sand.

Our lake is very shallow there are only about 4 areas where the water reaches a depth of 20 feet or so. – It a small enough lake being only 3 miles around it, that everyone knows everyone, when boats go by we all know who is who.

The types of fish that live in our lake are blue gills, sun fish, bass, northern pike and some perch, some cat-fish, and bullheads. This past year some residents wanted to see if our lake could support and be stocked with walleye. I was asked to research this to see if that species could thrive in our lake. I found thru the information from the DNR that it was unlikely that walleye could exist in our lake environment.

## 3. What lessons have you learned?

I have learned that to save the lake for the future we have to educate people. Not dictate or berate – the following is one example of a situation I found myself in.

My neighbor was feeding a seagull. – other neighbors complained about it to me and I said – I'll see what I can do about it. A few days later I saw her and said to her that others have been telling me that you have been feeding a seagull. – I said you know that's not a good thing to be doing. She replied –“ I know I shouldn't be feeding it, I'm only feeding one, because it is my daughter.” ----and I remembered she had lost her grown daughter several months ago. – but- I said “what do you mean”?

She replied – “shortly after my daughter died, this seagull started coming around and it landed right by me one day, and I noticed it had a marking on it that was just like the birth mark that my daughter had on her shoulder. – it's my daughter so you see I have to feed it. ----- Well---- I gave her a hug, and said – “If feeding this seagull gives you comfort then you go ahead and feed it. ---- that was three years ago, and I'm happy to report that the seagull population did not increase. – we still have two, sometimes there are three – and she is still feeding it. --- So I guess the lesson I learned there is sometimes you have to make a compromise.

I have also learned that if you talk to people about why they shouldn't burn leaves down by the water and that proper landscaping for lake fronts is important, that they will listen. There was even a neighbor who was dumping the leaves into the lake, --- again--- talking to them helped.

## 4. What new strategies or techniques have you employed?

Each year at our association meeting – I give what I call my “water report” I explain about the tests we do – explain where the data goes, and why it is important. I tell them that we are part of the Secchi Dip in from Kent State, and that we also try to take the tests on our lake on the days that the satellite is going over in case any of that information is ever needed by the USGS for their study that is currently on going.

I try to bring the do’s and don’ts up in a manner where everyone can be educated. I try to talk to people one on one.

I’m trying to show all my neighbors that I have a great love and enthusiasm for the health of our lake. To inspire them to also want to do the right things for our lake, -- to care about what happens to it.

I want them to know that we as a lake community are more than just a place to fish, swim and all the things that are perks from living on a lake. – that we are responsible for the safety of that lake itself if we want it to be there for our kids, and grand kids. That we can all work together. Solving one problem at a time.

This is my Great Grand Son Jayden

I want the lakes to be healthy for him and all the children of his generation and beyond. I would like to end my presentation with the following poem

Lakes by Jean Roth

Your lake may be big or it may be  
Small.

Or, maybe you don’t live on a lake at  
All.

But, it’s your responsibility,  
As well as mine.

To keep our waters safe for  
All mankind.

Be you swimming or floating  
Or wading around.

Maybe just fishing for dinner!  
Wow! Some big ones you found!

It’s all part of our lives,  
In this great lakes state.

Please help keep our waters healthy

Before it's too late.

Thank you.