

# R Lake Geneva REGIONAL NEWS

## Tacofest and more

Lots of weekend festivities, SEE INSIDE THE RESORTER



## Remembering 9/11

Williams Bay Police, firefighters create new patch, SEE WEST END, B1



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STEPHANIE JONES, SJONES@LAKEGENEVANEWS.NET

### FUN AT THE FAIR

Tyler Nelson, of Elkhorn, holds on to his cow before his showing on Thursday, Sept. 2, at the 2021 Walworth County Fair. For more photos from the 172nd Walworth County Fair, see inside and go to lakegenevanews.net

# Big Foot Creek at risk

Geneva Lake tributary has had high phosphorous readings

KARENA TSE  
ktse@lakegenevanews.net

A creek that flows into Geneva Lake is degrading in water quality.

Big Foot Creek has been proposed for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) 2022 list of impaired waters. The creek's high nutrient levels put Geneva Lake at risk, Geneva Lake Environmental Agency (GLEA) Director Ted Peters said.

Big Foot Creek is one of 92 waterbodies set to join the impaired waters list next year. The DNR lists waters as "impaired" if they don't meet water quality standards and possibly prevent fishing, swimming or recreation in those waters.

Peters has been aware of the Big Foot Creek watershed's issues since local water quality assessments began in 1976. The watershed has been "used and abused," he said, in its past lives as a dump and a collection site for runoff from urban development.

The creek in particular has been known to produce a reddish iron discharge—the product of a problematic chemical reaction, Peters said, which still stains the beach today.

To get a clearer picture of the



KARENA TSE, KTSE@LAKEGENEVANEWS.NET

Large culverts direct water flow from Big Foot Creek into Geneva Lake on Wednesday, Aug. 25. The water has had high phosphorus readings and could lead to algal blooms in Geneva Lake.

watershed's problems, the environmental agency spent two summers sampling locations within the watershed—once a month for six months in 2019 and 2020. They found high levels of phosphorous in Big Foot Creek.

"It's well above our criteria," Wisconsin DNR Surface Water Quality Evaluation Coordinator Ashley Beranek said.

High phosphorous can lead to algal blooms, Beranek said. And when these algal blooms die, their decomposition takes up oxygen that other organisms need to survive. The algal blooms can also be toxic to animals and people.

Geneva Lake is not currently listed as an impaired waterbody.

It was assessed this cycle for phosphorus, algae and chloride, Beranek said—"and they all came out good."

But while the lake's pollutant levels are manageable for now, outputs from Big Foot Creek pose a risk. Geneva Lake is a phosphorus-limited lake, Peters said, meaning the only thing keeping algal blooms at bay is the lake's limited amount of phosphorus.

"Every time we add phosphorus to the system, we're getting closer to a situation that could be very negative as far as impacting water quality," he said.

GLEA has brought in consultants to put forth possible solutions. These recommendations

Please see CREEK, Page A2

# Village Supper club has sold

Opened in 1966, last day is Sept. 12

DENNIS HINES  
dhines@lakegenevanews.net

A 55-year tradition is about to come to an end at a Town of Delavan supper club.

Chris and Dave Marsicano, co-owners of the Village Supper Club, 1725 S. Shore Drive, recently sold the business that has been in their family for about 55 years.

Chris Marsicano said he felt that now was the appropriate time for him and his brother to step aside and sell the business.

"We're getting older. The next generation all worked here growing up. There's been nieces and nephews, but a lot of them have other careers and have moved on," Chris Marsicano said. "We would like to enjoy a little bit of life after years of hard work."

Dave Marsicano said even though he has enjoyed being involved with the family business, there is a lot of work and long hours involved.

"It's a 24/7 deal when you get hooked up with something like this," Dave Marsicano said. "Even when you go on vacation, you get a phone call that something broke."

The brother's last day operating the business will be Sunday, Sept. 12. They have not disclosed who will be the supper club's new owners.

"We're not at liberty to say yet," Chris Marsicano said.

However, he said the new owners do plan to keep operating the business as a supper club.

### Beginning of the family tradition

The Village Supper Club was

started in 1966 by Chris and Dave's parents, Nick and Doris Marsicano. Chris Marsicano was about 3 years old when his parents opened the supper club.

"I've grown up in it," Chris Marsicano said. "It's always been here. It's just something I've always done. We're a close family. We've worked together over the years."

Dave Marsicano said he began managing the kitchen when he was 19, and he and his brother took over ownership in 1989.

"We just grew into it," Dave Marsicano said.

Chris Marsicano said, since taking over ownership of the business, they have received a lot of help from several of their family members including siblings, children, nieces and nephews.

"We definitely couldn't have done it without our family," Chris Marsicano said. "It's a huge job to run a place like this, and you can always count on family. They have always been there."

### Supper club vs. restaurant

Chris Marsicano said some of the main differences between a supper club and a restaurant is that supper clubs often have a more relaxed atmosphere with a full bar — and a Friday fish fry and a relish bar is a must.

"That's traditionally a supper club," Chris Marsicano said. "It's been voted best in the county for years. We're well known for our relish bar."

Chris Marsicano said supper clubs are popular in Wisconsin, but they are not as common in other states.

"Supper clubs are a tradition in Wisconsin," Chris Marsicano

Please see CLUB, Page A2

# Job fair set for Sept. 22

Extra \$300 unemployment benefit ended on Labor Day

LAKE GENEVA REGIONAL NEWS

Throughout the Lake Geneva area many employers are continuing to experience worker shortages. There is hope that the recent end of the extra federal unemployment benefits will help entice more to return to the job market. The extra \$300 weekly federal unemployment supplement ended on Labor Day.

To help connect workers with open jobs, a job fair is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 22 from 1-4 p.m. at Lake Lawn Resort at 2400 Geneva St., in Delavan. It's hosted by the Lake Geneva Regional News, Southeastern Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, and Equus Workforce Solutions.

To sign-up to have a booth at the Job Fair, call Nick Iacona at 262-631-1790 or email nick.iacona@lee.net. Booths are still available.

Over 30 employers have already registered to be there. To see the full list go to: go.lakegenevanews.net/falljobfair.

Pre-register as a job seeker to receive email updates and information about the event and be entered to win a \$25 gift card.

For those planning to attend, there are some helpful tips: Bring copies of your resume.

If you need help updating your resume, visit the Employment Resource Center at one of the workforce locations: Racine: 1717 Taylor Ave — Burlington: 1072 Milwaukee Ave — Kenosha: 8600 Sheridan Road

Dress for the job fair like you would for an interview.

Be prepared to answer questions about yourself.

Show up with a great attitude. Do your research—know what companies will be there and learn something about the companies you are interested in working for before attending.

If possible, apply online to the companies you are interested in before the event

Additional Upcoming Fairs are scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 13 at Parkway Chateau in Kenosha and Wednesday, Oct. 20 at Fountain Banquet Hall in Sturtevant.



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## LAKE GENEVA

# City to contest fee challenge

## Group fighting \$750 short-term rental license fee

**DENNIS HINES**  
dhines@lakegenevanews.net

Lake Geneva officials plan to contest a challenge to the city's short-term rental license fee.

Representatives from the non-profit law firm Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty filed a petition with the Wisconsin Tax Appeals Commission, July 1, to challenge Lake Geneva's annual \$750 annual license fee for short-term rental property owners.

The challenge has been filed on behalf of short-term rental property owners Mary Black, Todd Huemann and Erin Huemann.

Officials from the law firm have said they filed the challenge be-

cause they feel the city's short-term rental license fee is too high compared to other municipalities in the state.

City Attorney Dan Draper announced during the Aug. 23 city council meeting that the city plans to contest the challenge. The city's short-term rental license fee is based on how much it costs to administer the licenses and enforce the local rules and regulations regarding short-term rental properties.

"That's the basis of their challenge, and we're contesting that," Draper said.

Officials from the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty filed a lawsuit against the city on behalf of Black and the Huemann's last year regarding Lake Geneva's short-term rental license fee.

The lawsuit was dropped in July 2020 after the city council

approved to decrease the license fee from \$2,000 a year to \$750 a year. The \$2,000-a-year fee was implemented in 2018.

Representatives from the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty could file another lawsuit against the city depending on the tax appeal commission's ruling regarding the petition.

Draper said a representative from the League of Wisconsin Municipalities is set to represent the City of Lake Geneva in the current challenge.

"He's handling it, and I've given him all the information of the previous lawsuit," Draper said. "We had a previous short-term rental lawsuit, so I provided him with all the information and what we base our fee on currently."

Draper indicated that part of the reason the law firm has filed the challenge is because they feel

the number of short-term rental properties in Lake Geneva has increased, so the city should decrease the license fee.

"Even though the other lawsuit was dismissed, this one is really a new action saying, 'Well, you got a lot more short-term rentals now, so the diminishing returns is you should be charging less,'" Draper said.

Alderwoman Mary Jo Fesenmaier said the city could work with a technology company that would help keep track of the short-term rental properties in the community. She said the villages of Williams Bay and Village of Fontana currently work with such a company.

"That's something we might want to put in the budget, especially in light of this tax commission challenge," Fesenmaier said.

Draper said city officials con-

sidered such an option several years ago but decided against it, but it is an issue city officials could discuss again.

"Several years ago, there was a proposal that was out there, and it was decided that it really wouldn't help us because we can't keep track of where all the short-term rentals are with Airbnb and things like that," Draper said. "I'm not disagreeing. We could revisit."

Wisconsin state lawmakers approved a measure in 2017 which was signed by former Gov. Scott Walker requiring cities to allow homeowners to use their properties for short-term rentals for tourists.

The Lake Geneva City Council adopted an ordinance in 2018 to control short-term rental properties so that the properties are not poorly managed and do not become a nuisance in city neighborhoods.

## Club

From A1

said. "You get people from around the country who don't know what a supper club is. They ask 'Is it something I have to become a member of?' or 'Do I have to join?'"

Chris Marsicano said supper clubs seemed to be in decline a few years back, but they have seemed to make a comeback during the last several years.

"There was a time in the 1990s and early 2000s it kind of was in decline a little bit," Chris Marsicano said. "Everyone was looking for more modern things. I think the publication of supper club books really helped turn it around. Now, it's a popular thing to do."

Dave Marsicano said there are now supper club groups that visit different supper clubs on a regular basis.

"There's clubs that go to certain supper clubs every other month or so," Dave Marsicano said.

### A place for good food, service and atmosphere

Chris Marsicano said, over the years, the Village Supper Club has been a place for birthday parties, wedding parties and funeral lunches.

"You forget your restaurant is creating memories in people's lives," Chris Marsicano said. "A lot of people are sad to see us go, and they got a lot of good memories."

Dave Marsicano said besides the fish fry, the supper club also has been known for its ribs, prime rib and pasta.

"It use to be steaks and chops and stuff like that, but we brought in a lot of new items," Dave Marsicano said. "Since we announced we are selling, the prime rib has been flying out the door, because people say, 'I got to get the prime rib one more time.'"

Chris Marsicano said customers also have enjoyed the view of Delavan Lake, which can be seen from the back of the supper club.

"The view has drawn them in over the years," Chris Marsicano said. "They enjoy the food and they enjoy the socialization with the staff."

### Challenges during the past year

Chris Marsicano said operating the supper club during the past year has been difficult with regulations that have been placed on dining establishments because of the coronavirus.



DENNIS HINES PHOTOS, REGIONAL NEWS

Dave Marsicano, left, and Chris Marsicano recently sold the family business the Village Supper Club to new owners. The supper had been owned by the Marsicano family for about 55 years.



The Village Supper Club includes several dining areas where customers can enjoy a fish fry, prime rib, ribs, pasta dishes and other menu items.

"The government has made it harder to run your business with all the different regulations and rules that have come into play," he said.

Chris Marsicano said, like other businesses, the supper club has had difficulty finding staff during the past year.

"The employee situation has been difficult the past couple of years to staff your restaurant," Chris Marsicano said. "That's a universal problem all over Wisconsin not just with this industry but with every other industry."

Chris Marsicano said, during the pandemic, the cost of food has increased, and it has become more difficult to obtain supplies and products.

"You can't get product and if you can get it, it's sky high," he said.

### What they will miss the most

Dave Marsicano said he will miss the challenges of operating the businesses and developing new ideas for the supper club, as well as interacting with the customers.

"Every day you get up and you say, 'What are we doing today?' or 'What are we going to make?'" Dave Marsicano said. "I'm going to miss that."

Chris Marsicano said he also is going to miss the people who visit the supper club.

"There's an old saying, 'Walk in as a customer and leave as a friend,'" Chris Marsicano said. "After all these years, it's very true. We have a lot of people who started out as customers who became our friends."

### What's next?

Dan Marsicano said as part of his retirement he plans to "enjoy the time off."

Chris Marsicano said he also is looking forward to relaxing and enjoying some down time.

"It's going to be nice to be able to relax and decide what comes next," Chris Marsicano said. "We never had the ability to do anything at the spur of the moment and say, 'I want to go here or I want to do there,' because you're always working."

The hours for the final week are: Wednesday & Thursday 3-9 p.m. Friday & Saturday 3-10 p.m. and Sunday 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

## Vote for your favorite business

2021 is a year of new beginnings, a year of fresh starts. We're feeling that energy here, which is one of the reasons why we're so excited about the Lake Geneva Regional News' Best of Geneva Lakes awards.

This summer readers had the chance to nominate their favorite businesses. The votes have been tallied and the top five are out.

Now it's up to readers to decide which businesses are named the best!

To vote go to: <https://go.lakegenevanews.net/bestof21>



Online voting goes until Sept. 19. The winners will be announced Thursday, Oct. 28.

## Creek

From A1

extend far beyond land use, Peters said. He believes the phosphorus levels have more to do with a chemical reaction happening within the soil itself than with runoff from surrounding properties.

Engineers have proposed the implementation of small "treatment ponds," Peters said. These shallow ponds would be filled with limestone, triggering a chemical reaction to extract the iron and phosphorus from the water before it reaches the lake.

It's a costly plan, Peters said. The agency will continue reviewing the recommendations internally before making a formal proposal.

Big Foot Creek's proposed designation as an "impaired" water is not a death sentence, Beranek said. Its place on the list could help GLEA get more grants to work on the watershed.

Peters said the attitude of local property owners will be an important factor in the future of Big Foot Creek, and Geneva Lake at large.

**Engineers have proposed the implementation of small "treatment ponds," Peters said. These shallow ponds would be filled with limestone, triggering a chemical reaction to extract the iron and phosphorus from the water before it reaches the lake.**

"We will need a stewardship attitude from the property owners to all work together to resolve this issue for the greater good of the lake," he said.

The public comment period for the draft 2022 Water Condition Lists will be open until Oct. 1. The DNR will host a virtual meeting on Thursday, Sept. 9 to explain how water quality assessments work, review a summary of list updates and answer questions about the process and the lists.



KARENA TSE, KTSE@LAKEGENEVANEWS.NET

Water from Big Foot Creek flows into Geneva Lake on Wednesday, Aug. 25.

### Lake Geneva Regional News

315 Broad Street  
Lake Geneva, WI 53147  
(262) 248-4444

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9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon. - Thurs.  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday

#### Regional News Staff

Robert Ireland, General Manager  
Rireland@lakegenevanews.net

Stephanie Jones  
Stephanie.Jones@lee.net

Duane Hove, Account Executive  
DHove@lakegenevanews.net

Joshua Morris  
JMorris@lakegenevanews.net  
Steve Targo, Special Sections Coordinator  
STargo@lakegenevanews.net

Dennis Hines, Reporter  
DHines@lakegenevanews.net

Karena Tse, Reporter  
ktse@lakegenevanews.net

Andrew Tucker, Sports Reporter  
ATucker@lakegenevanews.net

Steve Romani, Advertising Assistant  
SRomani@lakegenevanews.net

Ann Desecki, Billing  
ADesecki@lakegenevanews.net

Editorial Board • Robert Ireland  
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