

June, 2021



Sylvan Lake Shoreline

Get the news you need at: www.slja.net

Publishing Dates: April • June • August • October • December

4th of July Picnic

(Garden Club Sponsored Event)

Date: Sunday, July 4th

Schedule:

9:00-10:00 Bike Parade at Schwerman Park

(lead by Lauren Rollinger). Bring your decorated bike, wagon or scooter.

11:00-3:00 Lunch at the beach!

(servers will be using gloves and masks)

Hamburger with Chips

Hot dog with chips

Beans/Brownies/Cookies

Pop/Water/Beer/Wine

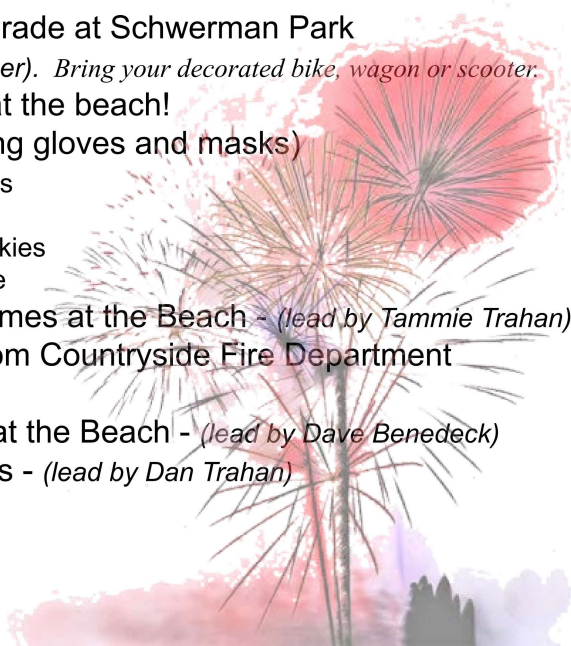
12:30-1:15 Kids games at the Beach - (lead by Tammie Trahan)

Afternoon: Visit from Countryside Fire Department

(If available)

2:00 Adult Games at the Beach - (lead by Dave Benedeck)

3:00 Sailboat Races - (lead by Dan Trahan)



Sylvan Lake Swim Lessons

Get your kids and their friends out to build their confidence and ability to swim in the lake!

Swimming in a lake presents different challenges than swimming in a pool. Rachel Finerty, who has been teaching the children of the neighborhood for the last 8 years, will be returning this year as our instructor and passing along some lake survival skills.

We look forward to seeing your family out on the beach June 21 - July 2. Lessons will run Monday through Thursday between 6 - 8 pm (Friday will be weather make-up days as needed). We will kick off with assessments for class assignments at 6PM on June 21. Look forward to an email with registration details

Margarita Monday + Trivia

Need a cure for your case of the Mondays? Join your neighbors on the beach on June 7 at 6 pm for a night filled with fun and excitement as we play our first trivia night! Sip on a refreshing margarita to cool off and unwind while we play a few rounds of trivia geared toward all ages.

(Margaritas will be available at the beach or feel free to bring your favorite flavor!)

Led by Jennifer Scharff

Sponsored by the Garden Club



Ready, Set, Spike!

Get your game on and get ready for Sylvan Lake Volleyball!

Last call for Teams and Players! Get your game on and get ready for Sylvan Lake Volleyball! Join our league for a fun and social time on the court. Whether you are new to volleyball or an experienced player, all levels are welcome! The cost is \$5 for residents and \$10 for non-residents. Sign up by June 1st.

Games will be on Tuesday nights beginning June 8th and ending with a Championship tournament on Saturday, August 14th. You can either sign up as a full team or as an individual to be placed on a team. New this year...team names, so come up with something creative! Plus the opportunity to order Sylvan Lake Volleyball Shirts...more details coming soon!

Please let me know if you would be interested in Captaining a team or need to be placed on a team at lauriemackay@gmail.com or 847-452-2205



Banner year for Spring Cleanup!

Volunteerism was at an all time high. As always great to see seasoned volunteers, but also loved seeing and meeting the new faces of our community. So many younger community members joined in this year, maybe because of the popsicles, but whatever it takes :)

Many hands made lighter work! We appreciate our little community, Thank you!

Renee & Jeri

Road work on Sylvan Dr South

W Sylvan South and its curbs will be replaced in the upcoming project which is being bid out in conjunction with Lake County for the Gilmer/Midlothian Improvements.

Bid letting is expected to happen this fall, resulting in likely a 2022 time-frame for S Sylvan work to be completed.



Regards, Dan

Sylvan Lake's Family Camp-out

Sylvan Lake's Family Camp out will be held on June 12th from 7pm-9am at Schwerman Park! Come join your neighbors under the stars for an evening of fun! Tentative plans include a kid friendly movie in the park, small fire pits for s'mores. A port-a-potty (sponsored by the Garden Club) will be provided, given there is enough community support for the event.

You bring your tent and s'more fixings. Everyone will be responsible for the clean up of their campsite. Parents/guardian will need to be present with their children the duration of the night. Everyone is welcome to attend the movie and campfires as well.

Please RSVP with number of participants for the camp out to kimberly.delbene@my.Rfums.org

Any questions regarding the family camp out please reach out to me.

*Thanks,
Kim Del Bene*



Keys Found

(Maybe for an Arctic Cat)



The keys were found during our recent clean-up day. They were found 15-20 feet in from Midlothian Rd. on Highland, about half way up the slope. It says Arctic Cat on a key.

If anyone is missing these keys please contact and identify: steve.luca@gmail.com

Parks & Easements

by Renee DelMissier

The parks and easements are really looking beautiful with all of the wonderful volunteers. Hats off to all of you who have spent time keeping our special community beautiful! So often we see neighbors maintaining the beach, parks, and easements on a regular basis, you are noticed and appreciated by the community!

In April, Indian Creek restoration project began where we partnered with the Township. Neighbors came out to remove honeysuckle, buckthorn, branches, large logs, debris and leaves. The yard waste was left in piles to be burned. On a later date, volunteers burned the dried wood and leaves. The pizza and refreshments were a big help too!

Thank you to the following neighbors and friends who spent over 16 hours completing the project. We had fun working together for a common goal. The next step is planting some sedges for erosion control.

Thank you volunteers:

Poorman Family	Howe Family
Stempian Family	Erdman Family
Bubula Family	Meltzer Family
Pomazal Family	Cameron Family
Haukedahl Family	Grandt Family
Mihel Family	MacKay Family
Pacheco Family	Mierswa Family
Schwerman Family	Rheingans Family
Stoeckel-Owens Family	Donohue Family

Clean up Day was a big success! What an amazing group of volunteers! The beach, parks and easements look great. Both playground equipment improvements were done, and they will be monitored for safety. An extra day was needed for playground repairs. A special thanks to Scott Hanson and crew who spent several additional hours doing the repairs.

Thank you volunteers:

Borst Family	Bowman Family
Love Family	Bellinder Family
Vale Family	Gartner Family
Meltzer Family	Ford Family
Doane Family	Stoeckel-Owen Family
Mierswa Family	Hanson Family
Washburn Family	Neises Family
Mongelluzzo Family	O'Brien Family 1
Stempien Family	Benedeck Family
Hamm Family	Sandford Family
Graham Family	Molsen Family
Hagar Family	Howe Family
Campbell Family	Trahan Family

Brashear Family
Cameron Family
Finerty Family
Lind Family
Anderson Family
Wawrzyniak Family
Scharff Family
Haseman Family
MacKay Family
DelBene Family
Bockhaut Family

Mihel Family
Erdman Family
Sweeney Family
Pomazal Family
Owens Family
Burmeister Family
O'Brien Family 2
Kirby Family
Crow Family
Dickinson Family
Genevieve Connor

FYI, Patsy Sweeney is not just known for her wonderful Jello Shots, she has lived in Sylvan Lake for 54 years and continues to maintain the entrance off of Gilmer Road and Highland Road just beautiful!

Oh my goodness, if we missed any volunteers, please let us know!

Schwerman Park

Eco-Chicks/Eco-Neighbors donated plants and two Oak trees and two Redbuds.

The drainage job is complete. Due to a dry spring, seeding will be completed in the fall. Thank you Mark Anderson, Cliff Gartner, & Gary Love!

A beautiful new flag was donated by the Gartner family.

Beach Park

The Benedeck family donated a beautiful Maple tree and Eco-Chicks/Eco-Neighbors donated a Redbud tree. The Gartner and Bellinder families planted the.

Mary Fortmann came to discuss the shoreline. She is the **Sustainable Landscapes Coordinator** at Openlands and works with people to help them to incorporate eco-friendly landscape practices on the lands they manage. Mary has provided over 800 consultations for public and private property owners to cultivate beautiful properties while supporting nature, connecting ecosystems, and reducing stormwater issues. She has advised some of our neighborhood families' yards.

Water Triangle Park

Alex Grandt donated a flagpole to the neighborhood located at the Waterboard Triangle. Mark Anderson and crew installed the pole and the Lind family supplied the flag.

What a wonderful addition to the neighborhood!



Continued

Parks & Easements

by Renee DelMissier

Maple Park

Restoring Maple Park has been a three year commitment. We worked with ILM (Illinois Lake Management) to make the shoreline safer, manage erosion, and added many prairie plants. Last year the Adam Washburn family maintained the trails. The park is a work in progress. In the near future we will add a pier, picnic table, and more. We will keep you informed as the next planning phase is implemented.

Shout out to all neighbors who maintain the beach, parks, and easements on a regular basis, you are noticed and appreciated by the community!

Good Information:

Did you know that Dames Rocket that's blooming now is considered to be an invasive species that are already established in the state and cause or have the potential to cause significant environmental or economic harm?



Another invasive species that is blooming now is Garlic Mustard. It has aggressively invaded numerous forested natural areas and is capable of dominating the ground layer in many areas. It is a severe threat to many natural areas where it occurs because of its ability to grow to the exclusion of other herbaceous species.



If you see these plants, please pull them out and throw them out as yard waste.

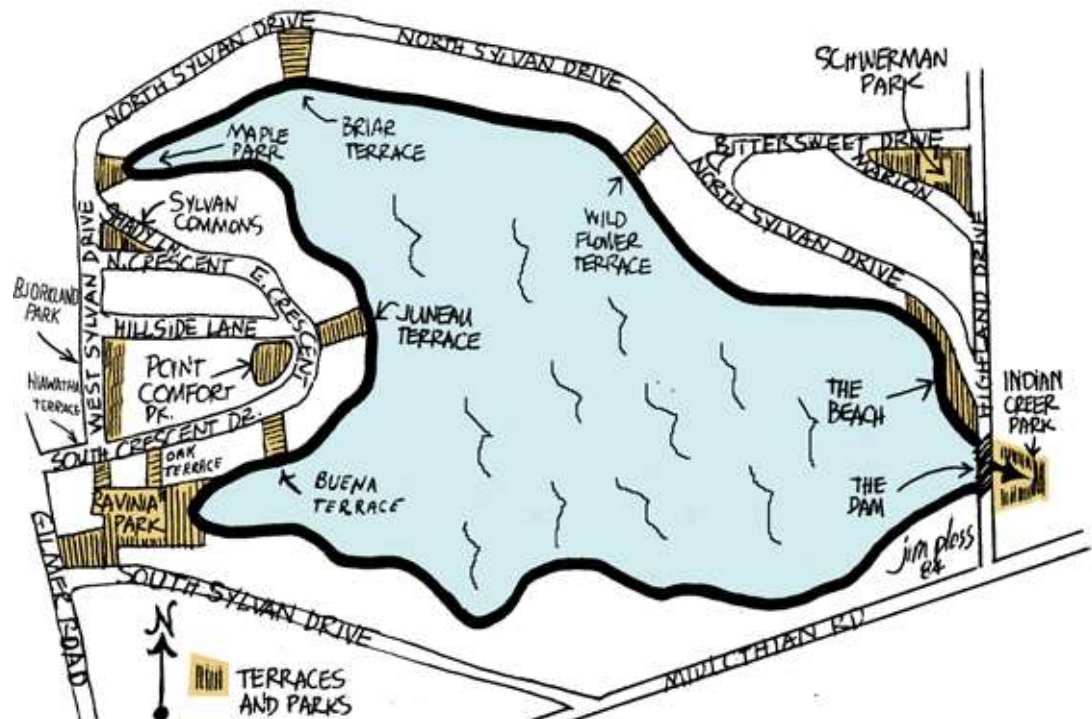
Did you know that the chemicals used to kill **mosquitoes** can also kill good insects such as honeybees, ladybugs, fireflies, and butterflies. **Spraying** can harm you, your kids, pets, and your neighbors. The chemicals can also harm birds, bats, and insects that help eat **mosquitos** and pollinate your yard. If you choose to use professional sprayers, they have strategies, such as standing with their back to the property line and **working** with the wind, to minimize the drift of chemicals into non-target areas.

Please remember you **cannot spray into the easement areas!**

Parks and Easement Review

We all know the Beach but Sylvan Lake has a lot more parks, easements, terraces and of course, Sylvan Lake. Here is a visual review. This map was drawn by then Sylvan Lake resident and Fremont School teacher Jim Ploss in 1984. There have been a lot of improvements. Street names have changed since we moved onto Lake County's Unincorporated Street Grid 8 or 9 years ago. The parks and terraces are still the same and enjoyed by all Sylvan Lakers

What is your closest park, closest terrace? What is your favorite park or walk around the community?



In Honor of Our Military

In honor of those who have died in military service, at 12:00 pm noon on Memorial Day, May 31, we had a flag raising ceremony.

Thank you Alex Grandt for the generous flag pole donation and Mark Anderson for heading the installation along with a crew of volunteers at the Water Triangle where the new flag pole is located.



Mark Anderson

Alex Grandt

ECO-CORNER #18

by Jenn Cameron

Sylvan (Impoundment) Lake ... what does that even mean?

We know that Sylvan Lake here in Lake County is more than the official facts that were listed in the recent Shoreline. We have visual beauty captured and shared in stunning photographs, fun recreational sports enjoyed by all ages such as swimming, kayaking, or fishing, and we can't forget our memory-making community activities like 4th of July Celebration and Carp-O-Rama. There is also more for us to learn about Sylvan Lake as an impoundment lake that might inform and guide how we protect the health of this body of water and continue to enjoy this awesome community asset for years to come.

An 'impoundment lake' is generally defined as a standing body of water intentionally constructed by humans or unintentionally imposed by nature. An example of an impoundment lake created by humans is when a dam is built to trap and contain a body of water ~ that's our Sylvan Lake. Nature can also create and trap (or impound) a body of water, for example, when large trees fall across a small stream and slow or stop the movement of water which then forms a pond habitat as the water backs up.

The Sylvan Lake dam was built almost one hundred years ago and works to both retain and regulate the amount of water collected from direct snow and rain precipitation, surface run-off from our yards and

neighborhood areas, and in-flow from other nearby developments. Residents' volunteer efforts and Board-approved lake management contractors have been involved in overseeing the general health of Sylvan Lake for decades, and over the past few years, the health of Sylvan Lake has come more into focus.

Both surface and below the waterline factors can affect the water quality and the overall self-sustaining health of an impoundment lake ecosystem. The surface elements of a small, man-made lake like Sylvan Lake would be the shoreline, wind/wave agitation or stillness, and the sun/shade areas among other aspects. Below the waterline happenings also interrelate with the surface and might include the water depth and differing temperatures, the aquatic life made up of plants and other live organisms, and the unseen currents and movement of water.

Sylvan Lake is special, and many of you reading the Shoreline have grown up here with happy memories, perhaps returned here after a time away, and there are other neighbors still unpacking recent moving boxes. However, as an impoundment lake, Sylvan Lake is particularly susceptible to being over-impacted by decades of human activity and development. Future Eco-Corner articles will take a deeper dive (haha) into the different factors that affect the lake health.

[https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/education/Documents/OnlineAquatic101\(1\).pdf](https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/education/Documents/OnlineAquatic101(1).pdf)

<http://www.epa.state.il.us/water/surface-water/lake-management-guide.pdf>

<https://core.ac.uk/reader/158299330>

Carp-o-Rama, May 2021 Results

Carp-o-Rama was held this past Memorial Day with huge success! John Rollinger ran this year's contest with an emphasis on making it more kid focused. It kicked off with an educational meetup at the dam on Friday with John walking through how to hold a carp, bait a hook, reel in a big one, and provided bells, lights, and lures for those that attended.

It was great to see our easements and parks being used by adults and kids fishing for the big one! After fishing all weekend, everyone gathered at the beach for the final count and weigh-in. The winners this year were:

Kids Division

Largest Carp: Lucy Rollinger, 8.04lbs (grand champ across both divisions)

Most Carp Caught

(3-way Tie): Three Carp

Each for Finn Rollinger,
Lucy Rollinger, and Ian Crow

Adult Division

Largest Carp: Rich Borst, 7.73 (beat out 2nd place by 0.05 lbs)

Most Carp Caught: 20
Carp by Gary Love

49 Carp Total



Mighty Volunteers at the Damn

Mighty clean-up help was needed to clean up the down hill slop of the damn in preparation for the rebuild project. *Thank you to all!*



Parks & Easements

by Jeri Swanson

Way back In 2007, Ravinia Park was restored by removing invasive plants such as European Buckthorn, Norway maple trees, purple loosestrife, garlic mustard & crazy vines. We then applied for and received an IEPA grant to do some excavation and install 2 detention ponds to hold water and settle out sedimentation there rather than in the lake.

Over the past 10 years, flow (run-off) has increased from more development happening along Gilmer Rd., causing this flow to move much faster and as a result it was bypassing the ponds. The last 4 years made this clear because the ponds were nearly empty regardless of rainfall. The solution was to re-direct the flow back to the ponds and shore them up with large rip rap.

There are 5 areas along the creek that were reinforced with some larger boulders.

The rip rap won't move and it will also collect sediment in addition to the ponds. Seed blowing around from the new seeding of surrounding areas will also get caught in the muddy rip rap and take root. In a few seasons most of the rip won't be bright white anymore.

After this excavation was completed, all the areas disturbed were seeded with native species, with the exception of Oak Terrace as this was restored with grass seed. There is also a strip from the step area leading to the lake that is a mix of turf and native species.

It took a bit longer for the seedings

to emerge due to very little spring rains. But it has finally happened and people can now go into this area to use their boats or just to take a walk and view the newly formed pattern.

Integrated Lakes Mgt (ILM) did this project. They are the same contractor as Maple Park shoreline restoration that was done 2 years ago.

They had to dismantle part the steps on Oak Terrace for their excavator to have access. When it was all over they reinstalled the steps and also installed a new post for the Oak Terrace sign as the old one was rotten at the bottom and simply fell over when they attempted to remove it!

Jeri Swanson
Parks/Easements



Getting to know your neighbor Stan Rak

Interview with Stan Rak, May 2, 2021

Written by: Peggy Delacruz

I was looking forward to sitting out on the deck overlooking the lake to talk to Stan about his life here at Sylvan Lake. His house sits atop a hill that slopes down to the water's edge. Sitting on the deck, you can enjoy an east view of the lake. It's a spectacular, breathtaking view. This particular afternoon happened to be rather warm and windy, so, instead, we sat at a quaint iron patio table with matching chairs in a screened porch attached to his house. Stan told me that the screened in porch was one of the best decisions he made. I think a screened in porch is almost always a good idea in Illinois, but especially in this case. The porch sits on the side of the house, on a quiet lot, surrounded by shrubs and trees that have been here longer than some of us have.

The first things I asked Stan were how long he has lived in Sylvan Lake and what brought him here. Stan has lived here 62 years. He celebrated his 90th birthday in September. He began to tell me in great detail about the decision for him and his late wife Rita to relocate from Chicago to Sylvan Lake. His attention to detail throughout his stories and ability to recall exact dates was not only impressive but made the conversation so interesting.

In the winter of 1958, Rita and Stan were both living in an apartment in downtown Chicago. Stan was getting frustrated driving 45 minutes to get to work everyday which was only 16 blocks away from where they lived. They both enjoyed visiting Wisconsin on the weekends so they decided to look for a home on a lake somewhere in Illinois. One Sunday afternoon they were driving in the area, cut through South Sylvan and saw a Real Estate Sign. They called the Realtor who told them there was only one house available and that it had been vacant for two years. The Realtor didn't know the owners and wasn't even sure how to contact them. This was December of 1958. Stan got a call from the Realtor early in '59 who told them he found the sellers. Stan and Rita made an offer for the house in March. Stan stayed in the house to get it ready while Rita stayed in Chicago where she was working for a lawyer. She joined him 3 months later.

This is how the rest of our conversation went:

Peggy Delacruz: You must have seen some physical changes in Sylvan Lake over the years. What are the

biggest changes you have seen?

Stan Rak: (without missing a beat Stan answered) The sewage system that was put in to accommodate the conventional houses. That was a big improvement. The Roads were owned by the Sylvan Lake Association. They were dirt roads that were covered with pea gravel and tar. They did that until Fremont Township took over the roads and blacktopped it. Gas was a big improvement because prior to the gas, which I think came in the middle to late 60's I had oil heat and the furnace would always clunk out and Rita would call me at work, "Its getting cold in the house". (Stan laughs while telling me this). Prior to Gas there was electric hot water, electric kitchen range, electric dryer, clothes dryer. Everything was electric so the electric bill was always pretty high.

PDLC: Every year Sylvan Lake holds the Fourth of July Picnic, Oktoberfest, etc. Were there any other traditions that Sylvan Lake had that got lost over the years?

SR: Ok, there was the Winter Club. That was to support the road activity because we maintained the roads ourselves. We hired a farmer to plow the roads and so we had to generate some money and so we passed a hat to put some money in. It wasn't much, twenty dollars a year, but it covered our expenses for maintaining the roads.....Oh, pardon me, the Association covered the roads also..... and the big event for the Winter Club was..... we had a dance in the winter time ...maybe in January or February... at the Fire station. We would generally get about 50 people that we wouldn't see all winter because they came out only in the summer. A lot of people did that....they came out on the weekends in the summer. But for the dance we got everybody together in the winter time and it was an enjoyable event. Now there are too many people on the lake today to have it



Stan and Ritas first date. January 27th, 1951

Getting to know your neighbor Stan Rak continued

at the fire station...but it would be nice if they resumed the annual dance.....it doesn't necessarily have to be in the winter. Ernie Washburn and I headed up the Winter Club...collecting the money. There were a few people who never paid their dues. We were still friends. We figured....if they could't afford it....so what.....

PDLC: You and Rita raised two children here. What are their names and what are some of your best memories of your kids growing up in Sylvan Lake?

SR: Stanton was born in '62 and Sheryl was born in '68. The memories of what was enjoyable...was just seeing them enjoy all the freedom with safety.... like the park across the street....Rita could work in the kitchen and look out the window and keep an eye out on the children. Stanton used to wander off. There were a lot of empty lots with heavy woods on it and he'd build tents or something like that, away from home and we could check on him to see if he was ok ..but there was never any mischief of any sort. Just growing up in nature. Across the street was the Chicago Park District Tree Nursery. Stanton belonged to the Boy Scouts. The Scout leader was the guy who belonged to the nursery so we would have the whole nursery to ourselves for scout events..... There was a facility where you could shoot rifles so the kids got some experience with firearms. We felt like the kids were always safe here on the lake. We always felt like we were up north because it was all farms. There were no houses or projects in the area. It was strictly a country atmosphere. Cows....we had cows in our yard at times. We'd come home from somewhere and there would be a cow in the yard. They had a barn on the corner where the Cherry Hill is. There were cows there and they would wander up and get into the community here.

PDLC: Wow! I didn't know there was a place to shoot firearms.

SR: (laughs a friendly laugh)

PDLC: Did your kids attend Fremont?

SR: Yes. I think Fremont opened maybe 5-10 years before we moved here. Before that, there was something down by Indian Creek Road. There was a school building that they used but we weren't a part of that. Then it shut down and Fremont opened up.

PDLC: Where are your kids now? Are they close by? Far away?

SR: (Smiling and with a tone that reflected a happy and proud heart he said) Stanton retired the first of this year. He has a P.H.D from the University of Minnesota,

in Chemistry. He worked for Motorola. His division at Motorola was purchased by Continental. It's a German company. Its pronounced Con-tee-nen-TAL. He spent four years in Germany. He married a lady from Germany and now he's back here and he's retired with his bride. Sheryl got her Master's Degree in Computer Engineering. Her and her husband formed a business which they both work in now. They both have separate responsibilities but they work together.

PDLC: Do you have grandchildren?

SR: I do...I have two. Emily and Adam. Emily is 25 and Adam is 23. Sheryl and her husband have been married over 25 years now.

PDLC: That's wonderful.... Many people who live in Sylvan Lake know that Rita was a big part of this community ...she was very involved in the Garden Club and traditionally greeted new members of the community with her infamous Kalochkies. What is something that you can share with us that people might be surprised to know about her?

SR: (There is a silence and Stan is thinking... With a soft, kind voice he says) I don't think this will be a surprise but she loved people. She did it just because she loved people. Let's see, what would they be surprised to know about her? EHH...I don't think there is anything....she would do anything, she loved everybody. I never heard her put down anybody.

PDLC: Awe. That's really sweet...(silence)

PDLC: And....would you be willing to share, someday, with our community, Rita's secret Kolachi recipe?

SR: (laughs a big, happy, laugh) I think it sneaked out. A few people at the events have presented me with a tray of kolzachkies and said they were Rita's recipe..... so....it's in circulation...apparently....(smiling).....I think it came from my mother.

PDLC: Stan, did you serve in the Military or the Army?

SR: Army. I served from '54-'56. I served two full years to the day. I was discharged at Ft. Sheridan. I spent one year in Germany. Prior to that I was in Basic Training in Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. From there I went to medical training in San Antonio Texas. (Ft. Sam Houston).

PDLC: Do you have any interesting Army stories?

SR: Well....I think every guy should serve in the

Getting to know your neighbor Stan Rak continued

Army. I think it's a great education. The experience..... before you set your life on a track.....because you get to meet a lot of people in a lot of situations...that you would never encounter in civilian life. You get to travel a lot, usually....you have that.....I spent many months in central Missouri in basic training and then San Antonio Texas. I lived in Germany and my last three months was in Beckley West Virginia. I just think the Army is a great experience for anyone. I went in after six years of graduate school so I wasn't as in good physical shape to keep up with 17 year olds. We'd march to a rifle range 13 miles there and 15 miles back.....the kids would never tire out. But I was 23 (laughs) ...I was getting to be an old man (laughs again).

PDLC: What was your career before you retired?

SR: Oh... Culligan. I worked for them for 35 years. While I was there I invented and wrote several patents. I don't own them but was an inventor.

PDLC: That's impressive Stan.

SR: If you google Stanley F. Rak, you will find them

PDLC: You said Rita worked outside the home?

SR: She worked a total of about 6 years... I think. She worked a couple of years out of Chicago and about 3 or 4 years here. She worked until Stanton came along... that was '62. And then she left because of the pregnancy.

PDLC: Are there any hobbies that you have that you want to talk about? Cooking or gardening or reading.....?

SR: A lot of the lake people know I have a greenhouse. I can show you later. I've had that greenhouse since 1975. I've recently sort of worn out of the enthusiasm. I used to start seedlings. I also had a hobby of raising cactus plants. I've also lost my enthusiasm for that but the plants have survived....in spite of me. (laughs)

PDLC: So you still have the plants you started from seedings?

SR: Yes, I can show you. And photography..... photography was not only a hobby of mine, it got me through some school....I'd do it for the school newspaper or the yearbook and I'd pay my tuition with it. And as a kid my father did photography....he built a darkroom in the basement and I took it over when I was about 7 years old. So I have thousands of pictures in files and things like that. Before digital photography came to be, I took black and white photography classes at the High School.

PDLC: I love that....

PDLC: Did Rita have any hobbies?

SR: Periodically she loved to sew things. She had a sewing machine that she used quite a bit to make things with....clothing of various sorts....cooking....she loved cooking different meals....and things of that nature..... people was her biggest hobby. She loved people. She loved getting involved with people doing projects like bookclub. She was an active member in one book club and (Stan laughs) she was a secretary for the other bookclub. She would keep track of the list of books they would read for the year and keep that going for them. She just liked people.

PDLC: How long were you and Rita married?

SR: 61 years

PDLC: I always love hearing about how people meet their spouses. How did you and Rita meet?

SR: Well, I was introduced to her through a mutual friend. I became involved with her when there was a New Year's Eve Party....1950....and even though I wasn't going with her at the time....maybe they still do it today....you bring a date.....it didn't have to be your girlfriend or your wife or anything....but you bring a date....to get in the door, sort of thing....and then once you get in the door....you can do what you want (Stan laughs) and I brought Rita.....and then we started seeing each other....I have a picture of our first date. It was her birthday. January 27th, 1951. It was downtown Chicago at a basement type place. It was a ratskeller, which is a German restaurant located in a basement hall. We went to a movie downtown...probably the Chicago Theatre... then we went to a place to have a drink and a snack. And I have a picture of that event. They had a photographer walking around. (see attached photo)

PDLC: And then you decided to marry

SR: We would see each other every Friday. I would finish school or work and I'd stop and pick up a pizza and bring it to her parents' house. We'd watch t.v. and eat pizza in her parents living room almost every Friday night. After I finished my classes, we got engaged. Finally, when I was over in Germany (serving in the Army) I found that a lot of guys had fiances and called them over and got married.... and they lived happily ever after. So I did the same thing. Rita flew over and we got married in Germany.

PDLC: So you lived with Rita in Germany for some time?

SR: About 8 months....yes

Getting to know your neighbor Stan Rak continued

PDLC: And where did you live before Sylvan Lake:

SR: Logan Square in Chicago at Kedzie and Fullerton

PDLC: And where did you grow up?

SR: West side, roughly, Oak Park Avenue and Diversey

PDLC: Stan, did you come from a big family or a small family?

SR: Four kids. Two boys two girls. Two sisters one brother. My two sisters are still living.

PDLC: Is there anything unique about your mom or your dad or brothers or sisters that you want to share?

SR: My dad was probably one of the smartest people I've know. He attended college for about six years. Spoke about six languages. He had a business. (Stan did some math in his head and then said)...so when he was 23 years old he owned a coal yard....in Chicago and it was a whole city block....in size. He was big in his photography. He supported a lot of things for people... charities and so forth....donations...and his time. He kind of amazed me with the things he knew and did. ... especially speaking so many languages....and we lived in an area Chicago where there was an influx of all kinds of Europeans....But he spoke so many languages he could converse with most of them.

PDLC: Was he born here?

SR: Yes, he was born here in 1894

PDLC: ok....this is my last question. Is there anything else about yourself or Sylvan Lake or your family, or anything you just want to share?

SR: (Before I had a chance to finish that question Stan began to answer) My claim to fame at Sylvan Lake is ...ok ...I fended off.....the garbage company. Waste Management. They owned 160 acres between Midlothian and Indian Creek Rd..... right across the street from the lake. They had applied for a landfill.... and I fought that for about two years..... I almost went full time here..... We had hearings.... I was kind of a central point for all these communities around here.... Mundelein...Hawthorn Woods.... those two mainly. I had files.... I had a basement full of files and.... so much paperwork evolved from that.... fighting that.... landfill. I-I..... I had to testify in the court setting in Mundelein... for a couple of days..... why it's not a good place to put a landfill. But I would have moved out of this area if they would have put a landfill in.

PDLC: Well....I'm sure people who live here now are grateful that you did that.

SR: Well....the newer people don't know anything about it .

PDLC: They will now!...(Stan smiles)

PDLC: Stan, I really enjoyed talking with you and I appreciate so much that you shared so much information with me and I can't wait to write it all down and share it with everybody else!

Please
Welcome
all of our New
Neighbors and
invite them
to join in our
Sylvan Lake
activities!

Garden Club

Tammie Trahan **President**
Laurie MacKay **Vice President**
Karen Finerty **Treasurer**
Nancy Hanson **Secretary**

Other Board Members

Kathy Ford
Nancy Hanson
Jen Crow
Peggy Delacruz
Lauren Rollinger
Fran Pacheco
Mariann Mortenson
Kelly Dickenson
Debbie Pomazol
Marianne Michnowski

SLIA Board

President Dan Trahan
Vice President Cliff Gartner
Treasurer Ed Meltzer
Secretary Jeremy Vale
Parks & Easements

Jeri Swanson
Renee Del Missier
Lake Tom Truffer
Beach Peter Lind
Recreation Laurie MacKay