



**LAKE IN THE WOODS
HANDBOOK OF RULES
AND INFORMATION**

**PROVIDED BY:
LAKE IN THE WOODS
ASSOCIATION**

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History of Lake in the Woods

Welcome to Lake in the Woods. Lake in the Woods was the brainchild of Dave English and his son, Dave Jr. A large tract of farmland was purchased from the Jaros family and platted into 144 parcels. Phase I began in 1984, encompassing the area from Route 306 to Haskins. Phase II began approximately two years later, extending from Haskins to Stafford.

The father and son team owned Northcrest Homes, Inc., and many Lake in the Woods homes were built by them. Other builders included American Homes, Heritage, and Williamsburg Homes. Original lot prices ran approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000; lakefront lots were more, and they sold quickly. Most home designs were based on standardized modules which reduced design costs. A limited number of self-build lots were available; all designs had to be personally approved by Dave Sr. to ensure that the development had a consistent 'feel' to it.

Our lake is man-made, and entailed excavation of many truckloads of scooped-out earth that was moved to create the present berms around the lake. Heavy equipment spent weeks tamping down the future lake bed so it would hold water. The lake eventually became filled by rainfall, and was then stocked with fish.

By the early 1990s, available lots for building were getting rare. The last several homes were built on Wilderness Passage and Moccasin Run. Even before major construction had finished, there was a fair amount of demand for the finishing off of basements, additions and other improvements. Especially active in this regard was the late Dr. Mike Uchino, retired Burton High School principal. Mike served as a general contractor for many such home improvements, and worked with a number of Amish builders. When he passed away in 1995, then-president Ed Votypka solicited residents to contribute for a memorial for Mike. The Amish built gazebo on the south side of the lake is that memorial.

Lake in the Woods has matured greatly since its completion in the 1990s. Both the front and rear entrances have received landscaping improvements, and a series of improvements have been made to the recreational area. Most driveways are concrete though some are asphalt.

Today LITW is a beautifully-sited, vibrant development, with access to excellent schools, great recreational facilities, solid real-estate values, and a bright future.

The Board hopes you enjoy your home and our community.

Board of Trustees

The Board is committed to reasonably maintaining and enhancing the LITW common areas so that it remains and becomes an even more desirable neighborhood in which to live.

As a neighborhood within Geauga County, the LITW HOA is governed by the Bylaws (also known as the Constitution) and the amendments, restrictions, conditions and covenants dated June, 18, 2018. We have a Board of Trustees consisting of 7 individuals; four elected in even years and three elected in odd years resulting in two-year terms. The Board elects officers, following the annual meeting held each November.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for making decisions affecting the community and property. They are tasked with upholding and enforcing the bylaws of the community to the best of their ability and interpretation. Decisions concerning the property are made during Board Meetings.

Channels of Communication

The board meets each month to discuss community related issues. This is a time when trustees will update the board on their areas of responsibility, consider requests from homeowners, discuss infractions and/or necessary upgrades to the community.

Each November, an “Annual Meeting” is held where all residents are invited to hear updates about the community and hear from each Trustee. This is a time when residents can engage with questions, concerns or comments about the neighborhood.

In between Board Meetings and the Annual Meeting, the Association may need to carry out the board’s decisions and handle communication by and between the Association’s Owners, contractors and vendors.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the neighborhood, please contact the Board of Trustees via email at lakeinthewoods44023@gmail.com.

Alternatively, you may submit in writing to:

Lake in the Woods Association
8575 Lake in the Woods Trail
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023

The Board requests and appreciates your cooperation in respecting that Board members should not be contacted separately on Association-related matters, unless directed to do so. Board Members are not individually responsible for resolving Association matters and can only decide on issues at Board Meetings or in certain circumstances through electronic voting methods.

Homeowner Responsibilities

Below are some important rules set forth by the Board of Trustees. Owners are responsible for adhering to the bylaws and rules of the community. Bylaws can be found in the link below:

https://www.lakeinthewoods.org/LITW_latest/bylaws.html

General Rules

- A. Homeowners and social members are responsible for the actions of their families, guests, and occupants.
- B. Any item(s) located in the common areas needing repair or maintenance should be reported to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Industry, business trade, occupation or profession of any kind, commercial, religious, education or otherwise that is evident to the public or to other members of the Association is not permitted.
- D. No signs are permitted, except as permitted in the “Sale of a Home” section or by special designation by the board. The rule applies to, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Political signs
 - b. School signs
 - c. Activity signs
 - d. Maintenance, repair, contractor signs
 - e. Announcement signs
- E. All structures and premises shall be maintained neatly and in good repair.

- F. No animals with the exception of dogs and cats may be kept harbored on any Lot of a living unit except by revocable permission from the Board of Trustees, which must be requested in writing.
- G. Outside storage of property (including but not limited to tools, recreational equipment, lumber, debris, junk, inoperable vehicles, recreational vehicles, watercraft, golf carts) is prohibited. Nothing shall be construed to prohibit the reasonably necessary storage on a lot of building materials during the course of adding to or remodeling a Living Unit, landscaping or a garage.
- H. Storage parking time exceeding 36 hours of trailers, motor homes, campers, house trailers, horse trailers, boats, boat trailers and other vehicles and equipment is prohibited.
- I. All vehicles need to be removed from the street if snowfall exceeds two (2) inches.
- J. Invisible fences are permitted to secure pets on a homeowner's property, however physical fences need board approval (see Architectural Guidelines for rules and procedures).
- K. The speed limit is 25 miles per hour except as designated on the north end of Haskins Road.
- L. The Board may add to, change and further define these Rules.

Maintenance

Homeowners are responsible for the following:

- A. Maintenance and repair of all structures and premises of the home ("Living Unit") and landscaping.
- B. Maintenance of gas, electric, pipes, wires, cable systems serving an individual Living Unit.
- C. All landscape beds on an owner's lot.

If an Owner refuses to maintain their property, the Board may have the work done and bill the costs to the Owner.

Pets

- A. No animals of any kind shall be raised, bred or kept in any home (“living unit”) or lot except that dogs, cats and other household pets may be kept in the home provided they are not kept, bred, or maintained for any commercial purposes.
- B. Pets must be under control at all times when outside the home.
- C. Pet owners are responsible for clean-up after their pets on their property, their neighbors’ and Common Areas.
- D. Pets are prohibited from interfering with the freedom of movement of a person or their pets in the Common Areas or creating a disturbance in any other way.
- E. Homeowners with dogs are required to clean up after their pet. For the convenience of the community, plastic pickup bags have been provided in the common areas at the Pavilion and at the entrance to the dam on Haskins.

Sale of a Home (“Living Unit”)

- A. Owners should notify the Board of Trustees in writing of their intention to place their home on the market as soon as possible. This will allow the Board of Trustees time to prepare any documents needed by the lenders, insurance agents, appraisers, real estate agents, escrow agents and title companies.
- B. All owners are required to notify the Board of Trustees in writing of any change in occupancy within 30 days of the change.
- C. “For Sale” signs are not permitted on lawns or in landscaping. A “For Sale” or “Open House” sign may only be placed on the day of the open house.
- D. The seller must provide the buyer with the following:
 - a. Copy of the Amended Bylaws (if you need the most recent copy, please ask the board in writing)
 - b. Copy of the Rule and Information Handbook; and
 - c. Information related to the Transfer Fee associated with the transfer of title between owners.
 - d. The Transfer fee is a one time payment to the association at the time a purchaser acquires the title to the Living Unit. The transfer fee is equal to two times the annual share of common expenses attributable to the Living Unit.

Trash

- A. Homeowners are responsible for contracting with a trash removal service.
- B. Trash is not permitted to be set out prior to the evening before pickup is scheduled. Trash cans must be removed from the street within 24-hours of pickup.
- C. Littering is prohibited.
- D. Homeowners should keep Common Areas clean and free of rubbish, debris and other unsightly materials.
- E. Homeowners with dogs are required to clean up after their pet. For the convenience of the community, plastic pickup bags have been provided in the common areas at the Pavilion and at the entrance to the dam on Haskins.

Complaint / Enforcement Procedure

- A. Complaints against anyone violating the rules must be submitted in writing to the Lake in the Woods Board of Trustees. Send by email at lakeinthewoods44023@gmail.com or to the address:

**Lake in the Woods Association
8575 Lake in the Woods Trail
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023**

- B. The Board of Trustees will, in most instances, contact the alleged responsible Owner after receipt of each complaint, and a reasonable effort will be made to gain the Owner's agreement to cease the violation.
- C. Serious rule violations, such as those affecting the safety of other residents, may result in the notification of the police and/or initiation of legal action.
- D. Unless it is an emergency which requires immediate attention, once notified, the Owner has 15 days to cure a violation and 7 days to cure an architectural violation.
- E. If the reasonable efforts to gain compliance are unsuccessful, the Unit Owner may be subject to a sanction.
- F. The association may file a lien for an enforcement assessment and/or damage charges.
- G. Notwithstanding, anything contained in these Rules, the Board shall have the right to proceed, immediately or otherwise, with legal action for any violation of the Association's governing documents, as the Board, in its legal sole discretion may determine. The entire cost of effectuating a legal remedy to impose compliance, including court costs and attorneys' fees, shall be added to the account of the responsible Owner.

Assessments, Fees, and Collection Policy

- A. Annual assessments (dues) are due on the first day of March. The due date of special assessments, if any, will be communicated on the invoice for said assessment.
- B. Invoices for annual assessments are sent out annually in February and will be sent by email unless a paper invoice is requested. **It is the responsibility of each Lot Owner to keep his/her email address up to date with the Board of Trustees in order to receive all correspondence.**
- C. The Board of Trustees may, at its discretion, provide a grace period after the due date to provide Lot Owners flexibility in remitting payments. The applicable grace period is stated on the assessment invoice. A payment in full made within the grace period shall not be subject to interest or late payment penalties.
- D. The Board of Trustees retains discretion in negotiating individual circumstances and determining appropriate collection actions.
- E. Collection Policy
 - a. Assessments levied by the Association are due by the dates listed on the applicable invoice and will be considered delinquent if payment is not received in full before the end of the applicable grace period stated on the invoice.
 - b. Payments must be made to the Association using the methods approved by the Board of Trustees (e.g., by mail to the Association's address or by online ACH payment).
 - c. The Association may refuse to accept payments which are:
 - i. Less than the full amount due,
 - ii. Not made using approved methods,
 - iii. Marked with notations or enclosed with other notes that dispute the total amount due or specify a different order of application than specified by this policy, or
 - iv. Are related to a home with a pending foreclosure case.
 - d. Assessments which become delinquent shall accrue interest at a rate of 15% per annum, pro-rated monthly.

- i. Interest shall be assessed from the due date of the assessment (not the end of the grace period, if any).
 - ii. Interest shall also be charged on unpaid collection costs beginning on the date that such costs were incurred by the Association.
 - iii. Interest is calculated using the 30/360 accrual method and shall not be compounded (meaning that additional interest cannot be charged on previously accrued interest).
- e. Payments received will be applied in the following order:
 1. First, to pay interest owed to the Association.
 2. Second, to the repayment of collection costs incurred in collecting assessments due, such as attorney's fees, recording fees, court costs, etc.
 3. Third, to reduce the principal amount for unpaid assessments, beginning with the oldest unpaid amounts.
- f. Any unpaid assessment may result in collection action, including letters, liens, updated liens, suits for money judgment, and foreclosure. Once judgment is obtained, the Association may proceed with post-judgment action, including bank attachment and wage garnishment. Any costs the Association incurs in the collection of unpaid assessments, including non-sufficient bank fees, attorney's fees, recording costs, title reports, and court costs, may be charged back to the Lot Owner's account.

Architectural Guidelines

To maintain the architectural character of the LITW HOA, additions, construction, building and other alterations of any kind are prohibited to the exterior of homes or property without the consent of the Board.

- A. Review of the architectural change requests, submitted by an Owner, will be in accordance with the following procedure and within the parameters listed below:
 - a. A written request must be submitted to the email lakeinthewoods44023@gmail.com or to the current Trustee who is the chair of the Architectural Review Committee.
 - b. The request must include detailed drawings and specific information regarding the request and must show the owner's lot lines and living unit.
 - c. The Board may request additional information.
 - d. The Board will notify the Owner in writing of approval or denial of the request.
- B. Work is prohibited to begin without receiving the Board's prior written approval.
- C. Owners are responsible for any damage to a neighbor's property that occurs due to the process.
- D. All fees and assessments must be current to request an exterior modification.
- E. After approval from the Board of Trustees, the homeowner is responsible for contacting the Bainbridge Township Zoning board and, if necessary, the Geauga County Auditor to obtain approval and any necessary permits for any project.

Common Areas

“Common Areas” refers to the areas within the LITW HOA that are devoted to the common use and enjoyment of all Occupants. The Association has the duty, as defined by the Bylaws, to maintain Common Areas.

The Association is reasonably responsible for the following:

- A. The Pool
- B. Pavilion and surrounding grounds
- C. Gazebo
- D. Parking Lot at the north end of Haskins Rd.
- E. The Lake
- F. The Dam, including the beach
- G. Mailboxes
- H. The Entrance to Lake in the Woods (306 Entrance and Stafford Rd. entrance)
- I. Mulching and pruning the landscaping beds at the Entrances and around the Pool, Lake, Pavilion and Gazebo
- J. Grass mowing, pruning and fertilization of the Common areas at the entrances and around the Pool, Lake, Pavilion and Gazebo
- K. Trees in the common areas
- L. Walking pathways in common areas

The Association may suspend the right to use the Common Areas for any Member with unpaid fees or assessments.

Pool Rules

The Lake in the Woods Pool is a privately-owned recreation facility. The LITW Board of Trustees administers the Pool Rules and Regulations.

Membership and use of the pool is a privilege extended to Lake in the Woods Homeowners and Social members whose annual assessments (dues) are current and paid in full.

Rules may be changed, with the approval of the LITW Board of Trustees, when deemed necessary for safety purposes.

General

- A. All Assessments (dues) must be paid in full prior to use of the pool.
- B. Hours of operation are posted for the season. Anyone entering the pool or pool area outside of the pool hours of operation is trespassing and will be subject to arrest.
- C. The pool can not be reserved for private parties.**
- D. The Homeowner's Association will not be responsible for any money or property loss sustained by members or their guests when using the pool.
- E. Members are requested to instruct their children and guest's children in personal hygiene (e.g., instruct them to use the restroom facilities in the clubhouse.) The Lifeguard has the authority to vacate all persons from the pool deck area if, at his/her discretion, the health and safety of the members are endangered. The pool will remain vacated until the condition is corrected.
- F. A responsible party must supervise patrons under the age of ten (10) at all times. A responsible party is defined as a person sixteen (16) years of age or older. Patrons aged ten (10) and older are permitted in the pool without supervision, but are subject to removal by the Lifeguard on duty if they create a health or safety risk.
- G. Infants are required to wear swim diapers in the pool.**
- H. Food and beverages may be brought to the pool. All trash must be placed in the trash containers provided.
- I. The following items and activities are prohibited:
 - a. NO GLASS of any kind is permitted in the pool enclosure including beverage containers.
 - b. No large rafts or flotation devices shall be allowed in the pool. Balls, toys, small baby floats and noodles may be allowed, at the lifeguard on duty's discretion, based on the number of people in the pool.
 - c. No animals, other than service animals.

- J. 15-minute Child Rest Periods will be called by the lifeguards each hour at their discretion except for the last hour of the day. Child Rest Periods allow children to take a break from swimming to prevent exhaustion, and allows the lifeguard staff to check pool equipment and test water quality. During Child Rest Periods, no person under the age of 18 is allowed in the pool.
- K. The pool phone is for pool management and emergency use only. No outside calls are permitted by residents or their guests.
- L. Homeowners and social members paid in full are eligible to reserve the pavilion and are subject to all the rules contained within the Board approved "Lake in the Woods Pavilion Reservation" document.

Conduct & Health

- A. The lifeguard is given full authority to enforce all swimming pool regulations as needed to maintain the safety of members and their guests. Appropriate behavior and cooperation is expected by all members and their guests.
- B. Everyone must leave the pool in the event of an emergency (including weather situations such as thunder and lightning storms).
- C. No running, pushing, dunking, rough play or any type of personal conduct endangering safety of self and others is allowed.
- D. Approved life jackets and personally-worn floatation devices, like arm floaties, may be worn in the pool.

Guests

- A. Residents may bring guests to the pool. Host residents must accompany their guests at the pool. Unaccompanied guests or other unauthorized patrons are considered to be trespassing.

Pool Violations

- A. Any violation of these rules should be reported to the LITW Board, giving complete details of the incident in writing. The Board will investigate each incident and take such corrective action as they deem necessary.
- B. The penalty for violation of any of the rules listed above will be determined by the appropriate staff and/or board members. Rules are subject to change during the summer to maintain a safe environment. Changes to these rules will be posted at the pool.

Pavilion and Open Space Rules and Procedures

The Pavilion is an outdoor covered venue next to the pool that can be rented for private parties. Directly next to the Pavilion is an uncovered open field that can also be rented in connection with a private party at the Pavilion.

- A. The pavilion can be rented for use by any association member in good standing.
- B. For safety reasons, if you are having a large party with children who will be using the pool, please reach out to the Pool and Lifeguard Manager to discuss the possible need to hire additional lifeguards.
- C. **The pool can not be reserved for private parties.**
- D. Everything is required to be cleaned up by the end of your party and put back the way it was found, including but not limited to:
 - a. Removal of all decorations.
 - b. Bringing all trash cans back to the parking lot.
 - c. Turning off the pavilion lights.
- E. The pool bathrooms are only open and available for use during pool hours. During the summer, it may be possible to extend the bathroom hours past the pool closing time. This would require additional hours for a lifeguard to remain on duty and those fees would be incurred by the homeowner. If this is preferred or necessary, please reach out to the Pool and Lifeguard Manager to set this up.
- F. Please send your requested date(s) and time(s) to the Pavilion Rental Scheduler. Contact information can be found at the back of the current Neighborhood Directory. Should you need a copy of that directory, please reach out to the board's Vice President/Secretary.
- G. It is the responsibility of the members using the Pavilion to maintain the condition of the pavilion and the surrounding grounds, including the pathway. If any damage to the Pavilion and surrounding areas occurs, the Board will assess the damage and the member will be billed accordingly for repairs, if necessary.