



December 2017

Happy Holidays to Castle Parkers everywhere! As we enjoy this holiday season I would like to communicate some important information to our membership.

First I would like to announce that the Association members and the Board of Trustees have resoundingly supported Gray Malin and Jeff Richardson for membership in the Castle Park Association. Welcome Gray and Jeff, the new owners of the property at 6710 Bryant (the former Veech cottage).

The summer of 2017 was certainly a busy one! With a record number of weddings, reunions and other parties during the shoulder seasons, the park was filled to the brim with activity from May through October and beyond. Playclass continued the traditions we have all enjoyed, the barbecues were better than ever, and the Rock the Park concert exceeded all expectations.

**Website Update** ~ The Castle Park website, [www.castlepark.org](http://www.castlepark.org), came online at the end of the summer and continues to be improved as use of the website increases. As with any technology, the more we use it, the more effective it becomes. During our 2018 Memorial Day Informational meeting the communication committee will offer more user support and education. The next goal for the website will be to provide online reservations for the Friday barbecues, Labor Day picnic, and other social events. In addition, payments for tennis and Playclass will be enabled. If you have not set up your account to access the member portion of the website, please consult Mary Ireland ([mcjireland@comcast.net](mailto:mcjireland@comcast.net)) or Ann Redding ([annredd@umich.edu](mailto:annredd@umich.edu)) for assistance. The general login is no longer available.

**Operating Budget** ~ During November the Castle Park Association Board of Trustees met in the Old Timers' Room with the main goal of establishing our budget for 2018 and reviewing the available financial information from 2017. One significant change in the operating budget for 2018 will be the addition of a maintenance assistant who will provide on site assistance during the shoulder seasons, absorb some of the summer maintenance, and provide consistency of service. With the expanded use of the park during the year, this position will help to keep up with the demands of the membership during both the summer and the shoulder seasons. In addition, the operations of the park get more expensive each year. The board has been very diligent in managing our funds however with the ever increasing use of the park in the shoulder seasons and larger cottages packing in more vacationers throughout the summer, the Board of Trustees has agreed that we have reached the threshold to raise our annual dues. The January invoice will reflect this change of dues to \$3330 per year. The budget for 2018 will be available on the Castle Park website as soon as the 2017 statements are finalized.

**Capital Budget** ~ The capital fund and capital expenditures are funded separately from the operations budget. Our bylaws require that all initiation fees go to fund the capital improvements. Recently we

have been fortunate to have a steady stream of initiation fees to fund projects like the Eb's Barn upgrades however we have substantial property to maintain and should not rely entirely on initiation fees to fund capital improvement projects; we have little control over the timing of the receipt of initiation fees making it difficult to rely solely on these fees to fund capital expenditures. In reviewing records from previous boards, it is clear that maintaining adequate funding of our capital account has been a concern. The board has the ability to add funds to the capital account if there is an excess of income over expense for the year. Other than collection of initiation fees, increasing this excess is the only other method of providing funds to the capital fund. The board will continue to work on ways to extract funds from our operating budget to provide a more robust and consistently funded capital account so that we can adequately care for our aging assets.

**New Cottage Construction** ~ Our construction boom continues. This fall Katie and Walt Nelson continued construction on their new cottage located to the northeast of Burtons. If you celebrated Thanksgiving in Castle Park you likely noticed the Weiss's project right at the entrance to the park, and the McIntires continue their major renovation of their cottage in the same area. In addition, as previously mentioned, Gray Malin and Jeff Richardson have purchased Doug Veech's cottage and plan to rebuild starting in the fall of 2018, joining John and Katie Palmer on the 2018 construction schedule. I would like to remind any owner making major renovations to their cottage or rebuilding within the park to consult the architectural guidelines located on the website.

**Beach/Bank Preservation** ~ During the end of the summer the board approved installation of Geotubes on the Castle Beach to control further erosion of our bank. Due to several factors, permitting issues, lack of contractors, early arrival of fall weather being a few, the project stalled when the November winds arrived. Lakefront cottage owners have banded together to strategize about the most effective strategy going forward. The most likely plan appears to be installation of a very durable armor stone revetment. While this option is not currently being considered for the Castle Beach, this strategy will most likely be used on North Beach (a 24' shoreline exposure). North Beach is technically a public easement but has commonly been used by Castle Parkers to access the private beaches to the north. This revetment is very costly but necessary in keeping the rising lake waters at bay. The CPA Board is exploring financing methods so that the association can contribute to the maintenance of beach access in this area.

While the board faces difficult financial decisions, I am totally confident in our ability to serve the needs of the Association in the best possible way. I always look forward to arriving in Castle Park in the spring to see what has changed and what will always be the same. Enjoy the rest of the winter and we will reconnect during the spring!

Martha Laughna  
President ~ Castle Park Association