

# Treeways

2018 -1

## Living Well in Sunfish Lake

Sunfish Lake is a hidden gem within the larger St. Paul/Minneapolis metro area. We have no high rises, apartments, businesses, bars or City owned buildings. There are four churches. At 1.7 square miles and 525 residents we are small in numbers yet big in joy.

We have three park areas – Musser Park, Harmon Park and Wahl Wetland that are minimally maintained as natural and mostly wild areas. There are hiking trails in both Musser and Harmon Parks. You can access these natural areas by parking your car on the shoulder of Salem Church Road or Angell Road adjacent to the parks. Some regular park visitors have permission from neighbors to park in adjacent driveways. There is no trail in Wahl Wetland. Commonly seen wildlife includes: rabbits, squirrels, deer, raccoons, coyotes, woodchucks, and turkeys. Less commonly seen are possums, mink and once upon a time a mountain lion was rumored to be passing through. Birds seen include hawks, crows, turkeys, bald eagles, piliated woodpeckers and other woodpeckers, on down to cardinals, chickadees, and sparrows.

Most private properties are larger than 2.5 acres in size. In fact, new home construction requires at least 2.5 buildable acres not including wetlands, waterways and steep hillsides. Fences and privacy walls are anathema to the Sunfish Lake way of life. We like our outdoor spaces seamlessly connected without dividing walls and fences and that gives all of us the feeling of even more space. Fences and walls should be considered decorative items more akin to garden art than property dividers.

Nearly all homes have wells for household water and septic systems for sanitary drains so it is critical that we not pollute our groundwater. If we pollute our underground water supply we are basically screwed.

All residents are encouraged to get to know your neighbors. When we know our neighbors then we know when there are strangers about. Some neighborhoods are forming “Neighborhood Watch” groups and we are all better off when we know and look after each other.

It’s still January but I am already planning spring and summer activities. The Arbor Day Green Fair is the first Saturday in May (May 5th) and flower and garden planting will happen soon after that. And then we will start complaining about hot, muggy weather. Life is good in Sunfish Lake, Minnesota.

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