



# Fall 2014



## Presidents Forum

Well friends, summer has come and is going quickly - it looks like our waters have weathered another boating season in pretty good shape. The chain is very appealing and we've had a great number of visitors, so the threat of invasives being brought to our waters is always there. With our volunteers and interns checking watercraft at so many points on the chain, we have been able to better inform our visitors about the danger of invasives while looking for potential trouble on their watercraft. As a reminder, one imported Eurasian Water Milfoil plant can cost our organization \$10,000 in control procedures, as it has on Virgin Lake. And that's just for starters as we work to control the slowly growing infestation. Recently another invasive has shown up on nearby Butternut and Trout Lakes – the Spiny Water Flea was discovered by a couple of concerned anglers. Thankfully the fleas have not spread beyond those lakes at this time. To help increase our effectiveness at the boat ramps next summer, we will be adding a third summer intern to our team.

Our organization won an award for the most effective lake association in Oneida County for yet another year. Speaking of awards Norris Ross, our vice president, won the award for outstanding stewardship in Oneida County. Norris won not only for the work he does for us, but also for his work helping new lake organizations get started and functioning. We are proud to help these associations and we are very proud to have Norris on our team.



Mick Seemann Photo

Our business directory has been well received by both our membership and our local businesses. We feel it is very important to the overall health of our community that our members support our local merchants. Almost all the businesses in Three Lakes are now members of the TLWA – as it should be. We need them and they need us, so let's support each other. We will be profiling various business members in upcoming newsletters so you can get to know them and their businesses.

Another program I am proud we undertook this summer was helping the town fund the repair and replacement of damaged navigational buoys on the chain. Thanks to our matching grant program, all the buoys on the chain will be renovated or replaced by the 2016 boating season. This effort helps make our lakes safer and more appealing.

With almost a thousand members, several organizations have asked for our membership mailing list. Let me assure you we do not share your information with anyone. That being said, the Town would like to help keep you informed – you can visit [www.townofthreelakes.com](http://www.townofthreelakes.com) and/or you can receive town board meeting agendas by contacting - [townclerksue@townofthreelakes.com](mailto:townclerksue@townofthreelakes.com).

On a personal note, I have never worked with a board of directors and a group of volunteers so dedicated to our cause and generous with their time and talents. Thank you all.

Ed Jacobsen  
President  
715-546-3771

## Three Lakes Chain EWM Update

# Burnt Rollways/Long Lake Channel – Great News!

By Norris Ross

Onterra LLC Aquatic Ecologists visited the Burnt Rollways/Long Lake Channel on September 10th. We're pleased to report they found no EWM in areas previously infested. They reported good populations of native aquatic plants including northern water milfoil and whorled water milfoil, another native milfoil. As they neared Long Lake, they found a single EWM plant, which is depicted on the EWM Survey map. At this point, we know that EWM is still present in the channel but the frequency and density has dropped dramatically. Onterra recommends continued monitoring and an Early Season AIS survey in mid-June. Should the EWM be rebounding at that time, hand harvesting will be recommended.

## Virgin Lake - the Battle Continues...

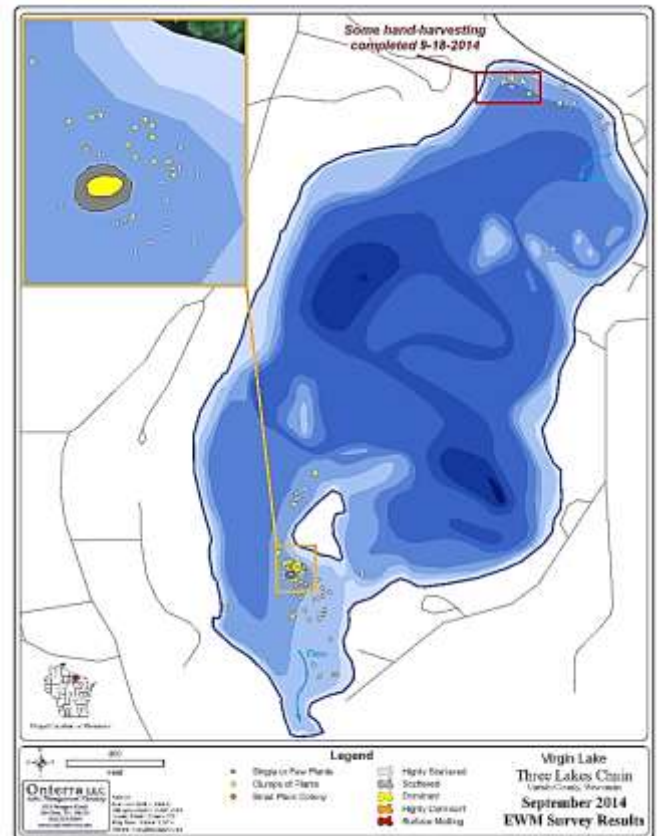


In a nutshell, EWM has spread to other areas of the lake and increased in density near the island. The Onterra Aquatic Ecologists were on Virgin Lake, September 17 and 18 to map EWM and attempt hand-removal

at the lake's north end. They mapped EWM in several areas of the lake and had limited success with hand-removal efforts due to the very darkly stained inflow of water from Julia Creek. They mapped a Highly Dominant colony of EWM located on the south side of the island – the general area of the initial infestation discovered in 2010. The DASH (Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting) team from Many Waters LLC, was contracted to remove the colony. On September 23rd, Onterra Aquatic Ecologists visited the lake to look at the colony area again - post-harvest. They assessed the previously Highly Dominant colony as now being Dominant – the suction harvesting team was able to bring down the colony one density rating.

While we are encouraged at the decrease in density of this EWM colony, the present density of the area along with the numerous clumps and small plant colonies in the immediate area is very concerning. The abundance of native aquatic plants is going to make it difficult to use hand-removal or DASH as a tool to combat these EWM colonies, which are now spread out over several acres. The TLWA board is considering an aggressive, integrated approach for next summer. Onterra has suggested a herbicide treatment for the south side of the island and hand-harvesting the smaller colonized areas of the lake, including the north side of the island and north shoreline of the lake. The herbicide treatment would target all known areas south of the island – roughly 8-11 acres. They feel confident of good success with this type of approach because an area of this size would hold a sufficient herbicide concentration necessary for effective results.

The TLWA board will carefully consider the Onterra proposal and make a decision based on the results of the “ice-out” survey next spring.



The Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> Survey Map showing the spread of EWM to the north side of the lake and higher concentrations south of the island.



High densities of native plants present a good news/bad news scenario for EWM control - the good news is it's believed healthy, dense colonies of native vegetation help keep EWM in check. The bad news is it's more difficult to harvest the small clusters and scattered individual EWM plants. The goal of effective EWM harvesting is to not disturb the native vegetation and minimize the "by-catch" of native plants. With this in mind, the Many Waters divers found themselves carefully hand-pulling EWM without using the suction hose in many areas.

## Virgin Lake EWM Control - A Work in Progress

By Jon Willman

In 2010, Eurasian Water Milfoil was discovered on Virgin Lake. Since then, the affected areas have been closely monitored, treated with herbicides and hand harvested in an effort to control the spread and contain the initial infestation. This past summer, the TLWA employed a new weapon in the war against EWM - it's called Diver Assisted Suction Harvesting or DASH. An experienced DASH contractor, Many Waters LLC headquartered in Iron River, MI was hired to work on Virgin Lake. Bill Artwich and his Many Waters Team visited Virgin Lake three times this summer and fall – we tagged along during one of their visits. Working off detailed maps developed by Onterra pinpointing individual plants and colonies by GPS coordinates and buoys placed by divers and spotters, Bill and his team went to work.



While using DASH, a diver typically will begin by locating EWM plants from the surface, and then descend next to the plant while also lowering the suction nozzle. The diver works along the bottom and feeds plants into the hose watching carefully for any fragments.

Once the harvested plants reach the surface, a hose dispenses the plant material into a series of screened bins located on the boat. These bins capture the plants and allow the water to drain out back into the lake. Plants on deck are then sorted into two categories - the targeted invasive plant and native vegetation. Both are weighed and all plants are then placed in large containers for transport to a dumping site away from any body of water.



Attacking dense beds of EWM with DASH equipment is quite simple and straight forward. However, in the case of Virgin Lake, a more systematic, conservative approach was needed because of the density of native Northern milfoil.



On July 12<sup>th</sup>, the Many Waters team harvested 36 pounds of EWM, on July 19<sup>th</sup> they removed 84 pounds and on September 19<sup>th</sup> they used their DASH equipment to remove 108 pounds from Virgin Lake in just 1½ hours.

Bill Artwich of Many Waters LLC weighs a bag of EWM after a hand pulling dive.

## Adopt-A-Shoreline

# Celebrating 10 Years of Helping Protect Our Waters

By Bruce Renquist

As the 10th season of Adopt-A-Shoreline draws to a close, I'd like to share a few observations about the program -

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) continue to pose an eminent threat to the quality of our beloved lakes in the Three Lakes Chain and surrounding waters. According to the results of the Waterfront Property Owners Survey of October 2011, 96% of TLWA members and non-members indicated they are concerned about the spread of AIS and this topic ranked 1st among concerns regarding their lake.

- Adopt-A-Shoreline is a winning strategy for combating the spread of AIS through early detection. A timely report of suspected AIS triggers immediate action by the TLWA including professional evaluation and a Rapid Response Protocol to deal with new threats.

- Our Adopt-A-Shoreline program is unique in the State of Wisconsin because it shares responsibility for monitoring the health of our lakes with each waterfront property owner. It's the perfect volunteer opportunity for a slow boat ride on a calm, sunny day of your choice, once a month during the summer. It hardly gets better. And, our experience has shown it's a wonderful family activity often shared and enjoyed by kids and grandkids.

- Looking forward, the TLWA will be holding workshops and providing reference materials to help volunteers feel more confident in knowing what AIS, and particularly Eurasian Water Milfoil, really looks like.



If you are interested in spending a little time on the water next summer for a great cause, please contact me - I'll get you in touch with the Captain of your lake and make the connection. 262-498-5351 or [bruce.renquist@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.renquist@gmail.com)

**Many of our lakes are well covered, but several remain underserved and a few are not covered at all. We need more eyes on the water!**

## 2014 Lake Captains

Big Fork	Maryanne Anderson-Stoll	715-546-3618
Big	Ed Cottingham	715-546-4298
Big Stone	Eric Wick	715-546-3587
Crystal	<b>Open</b>	
Deer	Dale Hitchcock	715-546-4386
Dog	Bob Jacobs	262-894-8977
Four Mile	Bob Pfeffer	262-284-2333
Island & Rnd	Rob McGrane	715-546-3913
Laurel	Mike Shay	715-546-3319
Little Fork	Bob Lee	715-546-3674
Long	Jack Werner	715-479-9094
Maple	Jim Skelton	715-546-3921
Medicine	Bruce Renquist	715-546-2401
Moccasin	<b>Open</b>	
Planting Grnd	Norris Ross	715-546-2250
Range Line	Mike Rieck	715-546-3647
Spirit	John & Cindy Lake	715-546-2117
Townline	Keith Mueller	715-546-3688
Virgin	Bob Borek	715-546-3457
Whitefish	Ron Friedle	715-546-3031

*Volunteer hours and information collected while monitoring shorelines are reported to the DNR. A detailed record of volunteer hours is vital to obtaining matching grant funds from the State. These matching grants help us fund programs to protect our lakes. If you have volunteer hours this year, it's important to fill out the form reporting your hours and drop it off at The White Deer Liquor Store in downtown Three Lakes.*

## Results of WDNR Spring Fish Study Now Available

In the Spring Newsletter, we told you about an extensive DNR fish study underway on the Three Lakes Chain. The detailed reports are now complete and provide a fascinating insight into the variety, size and numbers of fish in the following lakes – Big Lake - Big Fork - Big Stone - Deer & Dog - Four Mile – Island – Laurel - Little Fork – Medicine - Planting Ground - Round.

To view the results simply visit the TLWA website and click on the DNR Fish Survey Results by Lake button.

## [Adopt-A-Shoreline](#) [Volunteers in Action](#)

### The Medicine Bay Patrol

By Diane Brainard – Adopt-A-Shoreline Volunteer

Residents of Medicine Lake can rest easy, knowing their waters are free from aquatic invasive species.

When the weather is clement, armed with a rake and neon yellow vest, I scamper down the shore to meet Terry Moore. We ensure there are no spiders hiding in the kayaks, check that we have remembered the paddles and PFDs and launch our craft. Kitty Banner Seemann connects with us in Medicine Bay and together we begin our search for the nefarious Eurasian Water Milfoil. Having three sets of eyes makes it easier to sort through all the various forms of aquatic vegetation.

On one mission around the lake we enjoyed watching two eaglets in their nest. They were screeching insistently, waiting for their lunch delivery. I don't believe they enjoyed watching us as much as we did them!

Patrolling the lake has been delightful - spending time with friends, helping protect our amazing environment and just enjoying nature. Plus getting out on the lake can have other benefits – like stopping at Pine Isle to monitor their shore line – and perhaps enjoying a beer.

Bruce Renquist recruited me six or seven years ago to participate in the Adopt-A-Shoreline program. My son's passion and degree is environmental conservation, specifically invasive species, so when Bruce knocked on my door, I was delighted to volunteer. Determining the best way to hunt EWM created a problem. The antique Jet Ski really could not get me where I needed to go. Walking the shoreline was a bit tricky - difficult to climb over all the piers. I was really glad to be wearing my neon vest that day so there was no possibility of being mistaken for a devious character. I ultimately ended up borrowing my mother's paddle boat. It was easy to navigate and stable, but took a pretty long time to cover the lake.

After three years, my situation changed and I needed to pass on my monitoring responsibilities, as I would not be able to spend the summer in

Three Lakes. This year circumstances changed again and I've resumed my watch duties. It has been a marvelous summer. Kitty has patrolled using her kayak for a couple years. This is Terry's first volunteer year and she loves to kayak. She has a spare kayak and offered to let me borrow it. Thus began the Medicine Bay Patrol. This gang enjoys the day, friends and the quest for milfoil. Thankfully our lake is clear of EWM. As I began, you can rest easily on Medicine bay.



The Medicine Bay Patrol - left Terry Moore, center Kitty Banner Seemann, right Diane Brainard

Diane, Kitty and Terry are all TLWA members and volunteers in the Adopt-A-Shoreline program on Medicine Lake. If you have a lake monitoring story and photos to share with our membership, please forward them to Bruce Renquist - [bruce.renquist@gmail.com](mailto:bruce.renquist@gmail.com)



### Lose the Lead – Save a Loon

We share our waters with a rich variety of wildlife. The Common Loon is one of the

Northwood's favorite. Did you know they can live over 30 years and return to the same lake year after year? When they arrive each spring, it's like welcoming back a family member. One way we can help protect Loons is to stop using lead fishing tackle. Research has proven conclusively that ingested lead kills Loons by poisoning them.

For a list of non-lead tackle suppliers visit [www.northland.edu/loonwatch](http://www.northland.edu/loonwatch).

## **Shoreland Protection Ordinance Updates**

**By Norris Ross**

Three Lakes is currently in a unique position to influence the tenets of Oneida County's Shoreland Protection Ordinance.



At the TLWA annual meeting, Three Lakes County Board Supervisor Dave Hintz, outlined several issues currently before the Planning and Development (zoning) Committee that affect lake property owners in Oneida County. Dave encouraged

our membership to contact him and the County to express our views on issues as they arise. He encouraged our members to participate in the County's recent survey relative to docks and boat house regulations. You responded to the survey in grand fashion - the citizens of Three Lakes were the largest responding group in the county!

The Planning and Development Committee of the Oneida County Board is continually approached by special interest groups with proposals to relax zoning guidelines provided in the County's Shoreland Protection Ordinance - Three Lakes is under the County's zoning rules. Some dock and pier suppliers, for example, would like to eliminate regulations on the size, number and nature of docks permitted. Makes sense if you are in the dock business.

***Nearly all shoreline property on the Three Lakes Chain is zoned single family residential.***

Single family residential is the most restrictive zoning category allowing very little business or commercial agricultural activity. Pressure is often provided by individuals or groups to allow unique activities on single family residential property. For example, should a property owner be allowed to have horses, chickens, cows, lamas, etc. on single family residential properties? Seems like a fairly straight forward question until you consider the potential environmental impact. Imagine a single family shoreland property where large animal waste is allowed to run-off into a lake? How about a boat repair business next to your quiet, secluded cabin? A real estate office? A used car lot?

If these businesses desire to locate on single family lots, the zoning of the property should be changed and the appropriate procedures followed.

The State of Wisconsin has been working for many years to provide new guidelines for regulation on Wisconsin lakes and rivers to guarantee quality water resources into the future. These guidelines are being prepared to provide "minimal" state-wide standards. Many counties already have zoning standards more protective than those being provided by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. In Oneida County, the pressure has been to lower the County's standards to the "minimum" as provided by the State. Lakes are the economic life-blood of many Northwoods communities - it would seem logical to provide more protective measures than the "minimal" state standards. What are your views?

As a Three Lakes resident/property owner, you have a unique opportunity to influence Oneida County's Shoreland Protection Ordinance. Dave Hintz is not only your County Board of Supervisors representative and a member of the Zoning Committee, he is also the County Board Chairman. Let Dave know what you think should/should not happen on the shores of our lakes. He can be reached at 715-546-2712 or [dlhintz@hotmail.com](mailto:dlhintz@hotmail.com).



### **Three Lakes Residents Lead the Vote**

Property owners from all but two towns in Oneida County participated in the Pier/Boat House survey. Three Lakes and Minocqua had the highest response rates, with respondents in both towns accounting for a combined 43 percent of respondents. Three Lakes had 114 respondents, while Minocqua had 100 respondents.

## Lake Management Planning

### Plans Complete for Maple, Moccasin & Spirit Lakes

By Norris Ross

Our long-term goal of creating a Lake Management Plan for the entire Three Lakes Chain and a plan for each individual lake continues to move forward on schedule. A chain-wide plan continues to be refined as new lake committees revise the evolving document. Reports have been completed for Long, Virgin, Whitefish, Thoroughfare, Big, Dog, Crystal/Mud, Deer, Big Stone, Laurel, Four Mile, Big Fork, Moccasin, Spirit and Maple Lakes.

Lake specific data is being collected for Medicine and Little Fork Lakes. Data will be collected for Round, Island and Townline in 2015 and Planting Ground and Rangeline in 2016.

Informational lake meetings were held on July 10<sup>th</sup> for Spirit, Moccasin and Maple Lakes. Data collected by our lake management consultants was provided for these lake meetings. Comments from stakeholders are now being analyzed and incorporated into the next drafts of lake management reports. Maple Lake was inadvertently left out of the original stakeholder survey; accordingly, the survey was mailed to all property owners on Maple Lake earlier this summer. Results will be added to the data for the entire chain.



If you need any information for the studied lakes to date, or have other questions, do not hesitate to contact me at 715-546-2250 or [norrisross@frontier.com](mailto:norrisross@frontier.com) or visit our website at [www.tlwa.org](http://www.tlwa.org).

**For timely information on important issues affecting our lakes and waterfront property, visit the TLWA website at:**

**[www.TLWA.org](http://www.TLWA.org)**

## Education Committee

### TLWA Resource Center at the Demmer Library

By Paul Matthiae

Next time you have a question about your lake's plants, animals, invertebrates or chemistry, head for the Demmer Library and the TLWA Resource Center located in the Northwoods Reading Room.



Our initial library of reference material is in place and ready for use. We will continue to expand our lake, stream and watershed reference collection based on input from Three Lakes High School science teachers and other natural resource experts. The TLWA Comprehensive Lake Management Plans are also available for your review.

The TLWA Resource Center can help everyone better understand the waters we all enjoy. Our thanks to Doug Scheffen for designing and building the new display.



If you would like to see a specific reference book or periodical added to our collection, please contact me at 715-546-3453 or [pjmatthiae@gmail.com](mailto:pjmatthiae@gmail.com)

## Did You Know?

*Protecting water quality protects property values? A recent study of over 1,000 waterfront properties found that, when all other factors were equal, properties on lakes with clearer water commanded significantly higher property prices. In other words, people will pay more to live on lakes with better water quality. It pays to protect our lakes!*

## TLWA Membership News

# Membership Grows to 946

By Mike Freehill

Thanks to each of you, our membership continues to grow - renewals, new members among lake property owners, business memberships and our effort to reach lapsed members have all shown gains. Our total Membership grew to 946 - up 16% from May 2014. TLWA members now represent 47% of all lake property owners in and around Three Lakes. New member recruitment efforts added 82 lake property owners as new members since May 2014. 88 Three Lakes business owners became TLWA Business Members.



Our new Gift-A-Membership program is a great value and can help us continue to grow. Please consider gifting a membership to a non-member. The back cover of the newsletter has all the details.

	<u>Lake Property Owners</u>	<u>TLWA Members</u>	<u>Member Percentage</u>
Big Fork	128	65	51%
Big Lake	144	64	44%
Big Stone	144	64	44%
Crystal	33	11	33%
Deer	145	55	38%
Dog	63	21	33%
Four Mile	23	12	52%
Island	100	46	46%
Laurel	114	54	47%
Little Fork	80	42	53%
Long	118	73	62%
Maple	39	19	49%
Medicine	93	44	47%
Moccasin	25	6	24%
Planting Grnd	229	115	50%
Range Line	42	17	40%
Round	38	20	53%
Spirit	30	10	33%
Thoroughfare	53	21	40%
Town Line	60	29	48%
Virgin	85	53	62%
Whitefish	51	28	55%
Other Lakes	163	42	26%
Businesses	0	35	n/a
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>47%</b>

## Clean Boats – Clean Waters

# Over 2,600 Boats Inspected!

By Bob Agen

Our tenth summer of participation in the Clean Boats-Clean Waters program has drawn to a close. Our two summer interns, Jena Miles and Derek Thorn are back in college after a very busy 2014 boating season. Between the two of them, they inspected nearly 2,000 boats and helped educate over 5,500 people about the threat of invasive species. Our TLWA member volunteers inspected 653 boats and talked to 1,350 people. Our volunteers put in 445 hours this year and the interns logged 1040 paid hours between them.



Looking ahead to next year, we plan to add a third paid intern to the program. As in past years, an intern will work the Burnt Rollways lift and landing, another will work the busy Townline

landing and our new addition will be a “floater”, working different landings depending on ramp traffic. This third team member will help give us better coverage at more landings - something that’s been difficult to accomplish in recent years.

Member volunteers are still needed and more important than ever. Along with the Adopt-A-Shoreline program, Clean Boats-Clean Waters is without question the most effective weapon in our fight against the spread of AIS. And now with the discovery of invasive Spiny Water Fleas on nearby lakes, the importance of checking livewells, bait buckets and bilge water is critical to prevent their spread to the chain.



It is our hope that Jena and Derek will be back next year – they do a great job. I also hope our 2014 volunteers will choose to help out again and I am always looking for more volunteers. Please contact me at 715-546-3893 or [agenrobert@gmail.com](mailto:agenrobert@gmail.com).

A great big thank you to all our volunteers for their time and effort and I wish everyone a safe, healthy winter.



## Water Quality Monitoring

# Phosphorus-Too Much of a Good Thing Is a Bad Thing

By Fred Knoch

High phosphorus concentrations are generally associated with higher concentrations of chlorophyll (aquatic vegetation including algae), and decreasing water clarity. The WDNR has criteria by which they deem a lake as being “impaired “ by phosphorus. Many of our lakes fit the criteria. Phosphorus enters the watershed in many ways including shoreline development, faulty septic systems, impervious surface runoff and fertilizers - both residential and agricultural. By being aware of the effects of phosphorus on our fragile ecosystem and of its sources, we can all do our part to reduce the phosphorus load to the watershed.

The table below lists the lake having the highest phosphorus concentration on top and the others in descending order. You can see the relationship between high phosphorus content and visibility.

Lake	Volunteer	Vis/ft	Phosp ug/l
Crystal/Mud	Fred Knoch	2.23	71.9
Dog	Jon Willman	3.00	35
Deer	Reed Newlin	3.25	35
Big	Ed Cottingham	2.68	33.8
Laural	Reed Newlin	5.00	31
Little Fork	Schwiesow family	5.64	29.3
Fourmile	John Scheid	2.83	27
Medicine	Reed Newlin	5.12	25.8
Rangeline	<b>Volunteer needed</b>	5.2	24.5
Big Fork	Schwiesow family	6.58	22.75
Big Stone	Reed Newlin	4.63	22.7
Planting Ground	Jack Schlaefer	6.6	22.5
Planting Ground	Noreen Rossa	5	No data
Long	Fred Knoch	6.13	19.9
Virgin	Lynn Zibell	8.28	16
Whitefish	Steve Szpak	10	14.75
Maple	Ken Zator	10	11.5
Spirit	John Lake	15	8.84
Townline	Noreen Rossa	3.5	No data
Round	Mike Freehill	5.38	No data
Island	Gary Keuler	6.5	No data

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of the volunteers who go out on the water with their Secchi disks, oxygen meters, Van Dorn samplers, water chemistry samplers and have their basements full of chemicals much like the “ mad scientists “ they are. In truth, these volunteers give their time and expertise to gather data pertaining to the quality of the water which we all enjoy. This data allows the WDNR to monitor and manage our most valuable resource. Please take a moment to thank our volunteers for their efforts. And to the volunteers, keep up the good work! I know it may be difficult to get out on the lake on a day when the satellite is overhead and then spend time at home analyzing the results and recording them on the SWIMS website. Also, the most important months of sampling, July and August, are often the busiest for all of us. I know this because I am one of you.

All this data and more is available on the WDNR website. If you are interested in more detailed information, visit - [dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/Stations.aspx?location=44](http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/Stations.aspx?location=44).

The summer data acquisition season has come to an end and soon we'll be doing ice observations. See you on the water - either solid or liquid!



Fred monitors Crystal/Mud, Long Lake and the channel. If you are interested in helping monitor water quality, please contact him at 715-479-4158 or [longlake@newnorth.net](mailto:longlake@newnorth.net)

## Legends of the Lakes



### **Eddie Stanzil**

*Perhaps the most avid angler to ever cast a line into the waters of the Three Lakes Chain left us in July. Almost to the day he died at 94, Eddie could be found on Jim & Jayme Levandoski's dock on Spirit Lake. Rain or shine, he was there - sitting in front of his walker with a line in the water. We'll all miss his spirit.*

## [Islands on the Chain](#)

# A Look Back At the History of Spirit Lake Island

By Cindy Lake – daughter of Adam Motylewski

Spirit Lake Island was originally surveyed by C.W. Russell in December of 1901. Trapper Muskrat Jack owned the 1.75 acre island and lived there in a makeshift shack. The island was mostly pasture land with few trees and tag alder on the shore making it a convenient location for cattle grazing, as no fences were required.



The Motylewski family owned the adjacent shoreline on Spirit Lake and walked their cattle across a sand bar to graze during the summer months. The sand bar is still there today and used by our dock installers who walk to the island, as it is easier than taking a boat.

Muskrat Jack was not diligent regarding property taxes, so when he died the island went to an heir in California, who also failed to pay the taxes. In the early 40's, my father, Adam Motylewski, paid the back taxes and obtained the island. My Mom and her sister rode the Northwestern Railroad from Chicago to Three Lakes in winter to finalize the purchase. I am not sure of the price, but \$40 dollars would be on the high side!



Muskrat Jack and the cows had rendered the island just a grassy knoll. My father transformed it to

a wooded sanctuary, planting most of the pines on the Island in 1943. Most people did not realize the island has nice high ground, 9 feet above the water line, but my father and mother did. No sooner had my dad transported the pines to the island by rowboat, when a renter of one of his Cabins dug

one up for a Christmas tree – needless to say, she was never welcomed to Adam's Cabins again.

Over the years my parents allowed campers from the private camps in the area to canoe there and spend the night. In fact when our son was sailing in Marblehead, Mass, staying with a family who hosted the regatta, they discovered the wife had camped on our island when she attended camp in Three Lakes – it's a small world.



My father gave the island to John and I in 1967. We finally built a house in 1982, on the original site of

Muskrat Jack's shack - it has been remodeled twice since. As loons annually nest on the West side of the island and as the West and North sides shield the rest of the Island from the road, we have left dense underbrush there and planted even more trees for privacy.

Our trees, all grown since the 40's, have required dedicated attention over the years. Spirit Lake was a haven for beavers and they viewed our poplar, birch, maple and oak trees as tasty fare. One spring we arrived to find 125 trees down thanks to the chisel toothed pests. Fortunately, beavers are no longer active on Spirit Lake. We still have an abundant muskrat population, but they only eat weeds and erode the banks.

The big storm of 1996 decimated trees on the south side of Denby Island and likewise toppled many trees on the south side of our island - some 13 huge pines and dozens of poplar and birch fell to the strong winds. Witnessing the damage, Dad had tears in his eyes, stating that the house was replaceable, but not the pines.



*Cindy and Dr. John Lake have owned Spirit Lake Island since 1967, and still enjoy summers there. They are TLWA members and Adopt-A-Shoreline Captains for Spirit Lake.*

## [Adopt-A-Shoreline AIS Workshop](#)



## Hands-On AIS Training Held on Virgin Lake

On July 9th, Michele Sadauskas, the Oneida County AIS Coordinator conducted a workshop on Virgin Lake. Attended by over thirty Three Lakes residents, the workshop provided a real hands-on opportunity to learn how to identify Eurasian Water Milfoil. Additional instruction on the broader spectrum of invasive species was also covered by Michele and her staff. Thanks to Virgin Lake Adopt-A-Shoreline Captains Bob & Barb Borek for hosting the event.



Two similar workshops are being planned for the summer of 2015. The training sessions will be open to Adopt-A-Shoreline monitors, but more importantly, all Three Lakes residents will be welcome and encouraged to attend. As the threat of AIS continues to grow, the need to be informed is a responsibility we all share.



## [Rapid Response to Suspected EWM Infestation on Medicine Lake](#)

## Identifying Eurasian Water Milfoil Can Be Confusing

By Larry Swanlund

The job of telling the difference between our native Northern Water milfoil and the invasive European Water milfoil (EWM) can be a challenge - even for the professionals. Recently, crews from Onterra, LLC, the aquatic specialists we work with heard from volunteers on Medicine Lake that there were suspicious looking milfoil plants in a bay on Medicine Lake. As it turns out, the Onterra crew had observed these plants the previous day during part of their scheduled survey of the lake and they had field identified them as the native Northern Water Milfoil.



Field identification of milfoil species, especially hybrid varieties, can sometimes be problematic. The Onterra team decided to send specimens showing characteristics of EWM to the Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute at Grand Valley State University in Michigan for DNA testing. The results are in and the good news is the specimens submitted were identified as native Northern Water Milfoil.

While the results are comforting to those working diligently to manage/eliminate EWM found in our chain of lakes, it does point out the difficulty that the many volunteers who work on this endeavor have in identifying the difference between the two species. To that end, there are free tools available from the TLWA to help with field identification of EWM. A phone call to any TLWA Board member or Lake Captain can provide identification tools plus additional help from a variety of resources.

This case is a great example of how volunteers and fast-responding professionals working together got accurate, timely information about a potential EWM "hotspot". In this case the good news is it was not EWM. Had this been an actual EWM discovery, the TLWA would have initiated a quick-reaction protocol to define the size of the infestation, isolate the area and begin control measures.

## [Anchors of the Lake](#)



*Aquatic plants help keep the lake bottom in place, reduce the amount of sediment that is swept into the water and provide essential habitat for other lake dwellers like fish. Photo by Bob Korth*

## **Please don't call them weeds - aquatic plants are essential to the health of a lake's ecosystem – in many ways.**

**By Kelly Wagner**

Aquatic plants come in a variety of shapes and sizes: some sit quietly on the lake bottom, while others reach above the water's surface to take in additional sunlight. Together, this mix of plants offers a range of benefits for everything in the lake, from improving water clarity and controlling erosion, to providing food and habitat for insects, animals and fish.

One of the main ways aquatic plants help support life in a lake is through their root systems which act like anchors, helping to keep the lake bottom in place. Each time a wave moves toward the shore, the plants slow the water and deflect energy from the wave to help keep the shoreline from eroding. These calm water areas are a focal point for lake health because they help start a chain of events useful for everything in the lake ecosystem, from microscopic algae to top predators like musky. An aquatic plant's role as an anchor begins by reducing the amount of sediment being swept into the water and later carried downstream or to another part of the lake. But it doesn't end there. When plants slow water movement, they allow

sediment and other debris in the water column to settle to the bottom. Here, those wayward bits of debris will be broken down into nutrients, mainly nitrogen and phosphorus, which will be used by the plants as food to grow.

When plants finish growing and ultimately die, they begin to decay and pieces of the once vibrant plants will float in the water column and eventually fall to the lake bottom. This recycling of nutrients is not only important to replenishing plant life, but also to the rest of the organisms in the lake that rely on these fundamental building blocks of life.

Insects like moths have larvae that feed on aquatic plants, as do caddis flies, and even some grasshoppers.



*Photo © USFWS*

Turtles and crayfish will also eat plants, and even bluegills will eat the leaves and stems of aquatic plants. Beavers chew not only on trees, but also on aquatic plants like sedges, water lilies and pondweeds. Even large land-welling mammals like deer, elk and moose will venture to the water for a meal.



*Photo © USFWS*

Some water birds are dependent upon aquatic vegetation. This is evident in the names of aquatic plants like duck weed, duck potato, watermeal and wild celery. The wild celery plant, unrelated to the grocery store variety, happens to be favored by canvasback ducks.

Part of the scientific name for the duck, *Aythya valisineria*, comes from the scientific name of wild celery (*Vallisneria*). Wild celery is so important to canvasback ducks that restoration of the canvasback duck population on the upper Mississippi River relies on the restoration of this key aquatic plant.

Besides being a food source, some animals will use spongy, buoyant and waterproof plants to build nests. Loons, other water birds and muskrats favor emergent plants that stick up out of the water for this purpose. The strategy is especially useful because the nest will float with the rising and falling of lake levels. In addition, the nest is built right in the near shore area, where there is plenty of food and cover for young fledglings.



Photo by Frank Koshere

Many other lake-dwellers call aquatic vegetation home. Filter-feeding insects sift the water and pull algae out of the water column. There are also grazing insects, such as snails, that scrape algae off of plants, helping the plants absorb more

sunlight. Tall, leafy plants provide hiding spots from predators. Frogs will dart into plants to escape the beak of a heron or the jaws of a pike. And, of course, there are fish.

The shapes and sizes of aquatic plants affect their ability to hide fish. Bass for example, need to eat smaller fish to grow, and have a harder time catching fish that feed in the finely divided leaves and highly branched stems of species such as non-native Eurasian water-milfoil than those that are in the more open architecture of native pondweeds. Pondweeds (often referred to as musky weed, cabbage or bass weed by anglers), are prized for their indication of good fishing habitat.

Often, it is the amount and type of plant cover — the percentage of the lake bottom that is covered by plants — that is most important to fish, rather than the particular species of plants. Researchers have been trying for many years to zero in on the optimal amount of plant cover for fish, but different plant habitats favor different types of fish.

Many popular game fish, such as bluegill and largemouth bass, reach their largest sizes in areas of moderate plant cover. A lake with very dense

plants is less desirable for predator fish — their growth can be slower in the densely-vegetated lakes where the cover impedes their ability to find and capture prey. Sparse plant cover is associated with several small non-game fish, as well as populations of rough fish, like carp.



Plants are also important to the success of fish reproduction. Bass and bluegill build their nests among vegetation, which shelters

the nest and provides cover for the young fish once they hatch. Many species, including northern pike, musky and yellow perch, spawn within areas of aquatic vegetation, depositing their eggs either on or among low-growing plants. The young and vulnerable fish of most species will also take refuge in plants.



Photo by Paul Skawinski

In addition to food, refuge and spawning, aquatic plants provide underwater animals with something else they need: oxygen. Some oxygen enters the water from the air, but much of the dissolved oxygen in lakes is produced by either aquatic plants or algae as a byproduct of photosynthesis. When aquatic plants are in a healthy balance, they offer an essential give-and-take relationship to the lake ecosystem — providing habitat for fish and animals, while maintaining clear water and making our lakes the scenic and desirable places to be year-round.

*Kelly Wagner is a WDNR scientist and conducts research on aquatic ecology and invasive species in Wisconsin lakes. Our thanks to Wisconsin Natural Resources Magazine for permission to reprint this story.*



TLWA President Ed Jacobson captivated attendees with a brief “state of the association” address.



Michele Sadauskas, Oneida County AIS Coordinator spoke on responsible shoreline development, the importance of natural shorelines and their effect on lake health and water quality.



Dave Hintz, Three Lakes County Supervisor and Oneida County Board Chairman shared the latest thinking on shoreline zoning rules and regulations in Oneida County.



John Kusiak, WDNR Fisheries Biologist based in Rhinelander shared his insights on the spring fish survey conducted on the Three Lakes Chain.

## **Oneida County Recognizes TLWA & Local Volunteers at Annual AIS Banquet**

The Three Lakes Waterfront Association, TLWA Vice President Norris Ross and longtime Virgin Lake resident Gene Ohm were all recognized at the 6th Annual Oneida County Lake Volunteers Awards Banquet. The TLWA received the Outstanding Stewardship for Lakes Group Award, Norris was recognized with an Outstanding Lake Stewardship Award and Gene received a 20-year Citizen Monitoring Award for his work on Virgin Lake.



Norris Ross



Gene Ohm

## **Spiny Water Fleas Found in Butternut and Trout Lakes**

The discovery of Spiny Water Fleas in local lakes is a tragedy. Butternut and Trout lakes are home to some of the best fishing and clearest waters in the state. The invasives were discovered by alert anglers who found them on their fishing lines.



The fleas feed on zooplankton which feeds on algae – the result over time can be a negative

effect on water clarity. The native fish population has a difficult time eating the fleas because of their long, spiny tail.



Because these fleas are almost impossible to see, they are the most dangerous of invasives.

***The 2015 TLWA Annual Meeting is scheduled for July 10, 6PM at the Reiter Center in Three Lakes.***

## Local Business Profile

# Steve Bennett Electric & Snow Plowing

By Jerry Schiedt

Steve Bennett, owner of Bennett electric, was born and raised in Northfield, IL. He has almost 40 years' experience in the electrical business. In 1976, he began working for his father – also an electrician - and in 1980, started his own electrical contracting business. His journey to Three Lakes began when his brother bought a home here and subsequently sold it to Steve in 1991.



Steve and Peggy, his wife of 26 years, have three children – Alex, Jeremy and Steven. Son Steven is following the family tradition

serving his electricians apprenticeship while working with his dad for the past eight years. In addition to his electrical contracting and snow plowing businesses, Steve is also a member of the Three Lakes Volunteer Fire Department.

His approach to the electrical business is simple - be professional and do high quality work. Steve's customers consistently comment on the neatness of his work.

While not a waterfront property owner, Steve became a member of the TLWA because he believes in helping keep our waters clean and free of invasives. "Clean lakes mean so much to the people who live here and the businesses of Three Lakes." Steve can be reached at 715-546-3773.

## Please Patronize Our Local Business Members

The merchants, professionals and tradesmen listed in the TLWA Local Business Directory share our commitment to clean water and protecting our quality of life in the Northwoods. They deserve our support.

## Profiles of Past TLWA Scholarship Winners

# Cory Wallschlaeger Three Lakes Class of 2003

The TLWA began awarding scholarships to college bound Three Lakes High School students way back in 1989. To date we have awarded over \$25,000 to graduates interested in the varied fields of natural resources management.



Our 2003 award winner, Cory Wallschlaeger, went on to UW Steven-Point and graduated in 2008 with a degree in Watershed Hydrology Management. He is now the Utilities Supervisor for the community of Stockbridge, WI.

Cory and his wife Natasha reside in Wausau with their three year old daughter Tia. They are anxiously awaiting the birth of their second child. Cory enjoys playing softball, hunting and bowling.

Cory believes the scholarship he received from the TLWA helped him achieve his career in natural resources management.



If you know other TLWA scholarship winners who have gone on to careers in natural resources, we would like to hear from you. Contact me at 715-546-4293 or [jschiedt1@frontier.com](mailto:jschiedt1@frontier.com)



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# What is the Perfect Gift for a Person Who Has Everything and Is Not a Member of the TLWA?

## **A TLWA Gift Membership of Course!**

Help us toward our goal of every property owner becoming a TLWA member. Buy a one-year, \$20.00 TLWA membership for a non-member friend or neighbor and get a **free one-year extension** to your membership. We'll even send your gift recipient a letter naming you as their sponsor. It's the perfect gift!

### **GIFT-A-MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM**

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*Please return this coupon with your check to - TLWA, PO Box 145, Three Lakes, WI 54562*



## Three Lakes Area Turtle Crossing Update

Thanks to the efforts of the Three Lakes Girl Scouts and WDNR Conservation Warden Pat Novesky, public awareness of turtle crossings on our town roads has been raised to a whole new level. The Girl Scouts took on the project as a public service program holding fund raisers, working closely with Pat, the Town of Three Lakes and the WDNR to obtain materials and permission to mark town roads and erect signs. Our thanks to these young ladies and their leaders for a job well done.



The good news is local motorists seems to be getting the message. Warden Pat reports seeing three cars with hazard lights on helping turtles across North Big Lake Loop - all in one day!

He came upon another gentleman on CTH X helping a big snapper across the road.

And now the bad news – several of the new turtle crossing signs have already disappeared. It's hard to imagine the immaturity and stupidity of the thieves. The signs cost upwards of \$25 each and the Girl Scouts worked hard to make this program happen. If anyone has information regarding the theft of the signs, please contact Warden Novesky or the Three Lakes Police Department. We can only hope the thieves will come to their senses and return the signs before next turtle crossing season.