



## COOL, CRISP DAYS OF FALL



**September 2019**

*~ Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower. ~*  
Albert Camus

Fall is a bitter-sweet season of crunchy, colorful leaves and acorns hitting you on the head as you walk through the woods, and it is a harbinger of the cold winter days to come. Fall is the end of summer projects and events that MWLA volunteers help with such as volunteering for AIS monitoring, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July MWLA booth, Trout Pond, Annual Meeting, and Cran-a-rama. We couldn't do it without your thoughtful and generous help. Thank you all so very much!

**Don't forget to attend MW Cran-a-rama Saturday, October 5 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** The MWLA will have a merchandise and informational booth with handouts, t-shirts, hoodies and hats. The Discovery Center will have an AIS booth full of informational materials, plus Water's Marine and Greer's will each be donating the use of one pontoon to the MWLA free fall pontoon cruises during Cran-a-rama and driven by MWLA volunteers,

It's not too late to renew your membership for this year. You can access a renewal form on our website [www.mwlakes.com](http://www.mwlakes.com). Annual dues are **only \$25.00** and run from June 1 to May 31 of the following year. **Please encourage your friends and neighbors to join the MWLA. Everyone who loves and enjoys the waters of our township should help support our efforts "to maintain, protect and enhance our water quality, fishery, boating safety, and native habitat".**

**...AND TO EDUCATE**  
by MWLA president, Greg Holt

Protect, maintain and enhance. These 3 words may come to mind when folks think about the MWLA. The words are in big bold print on our website. You'll find them in our brochure and on the pages of many of our newsletters. And it is what this volunteer organization is largely about - protecting, maintaining and enhancing the waters of our township.

But if you take a look at the purpose statement for the MWLA, right before the part about "protect, maintain and enhance" the statement reads "The purpose of the MWLA is to **educate** the public..."

Folks who attended this year's MWLA Annual Meeting were able to get a good dose of that education. Tom Kramer brought us up to date on the Walleyes for Tomorrow Program and efforts to improve fish habitat. Quita Sheehan from the Vilas County Land and Water Conservation Department educated us on how to promote healthy waters through thoughtful management of our properties and shorelines. Emily Heald, whose excellent leadership of the Town Aquatic Invasive Species Program is critical in working to control invasive species let us know what we have accomplished and what we must continue to do. David Bartling educated us how Bartling's Manitowish Cranberry Co. works to sustain land and water resources while growing cranberries.

Volunteers man our booths at community events, answering questions and providing information. Those who help with the pontoon rides at Cran-A-Rama use the opportunity to teach visitors about the wonders of our waters. Volunteers helping with the trout pond on July 4<sup>th</sup> teach kids that yes, maybe they can catch a "big one".

Volunteers involved in the Sturgeon Watch Program pass spring migration information on to the DNR. Water clarity and chemistry volunteers collect data that is used statewide to learn about trends, successes and potential problems. Folks involved with the Loon Watch Program gather and share important information on the population of these iconic yearly visitors.

Citizen scientists discover things about our waters as they monitor shorelines, lakes and rivers. As volunteers clip tops from Purple Loosestrife plants, we are learning the degree to which the beetle control program is succeeding.

So, a big thank you to all the volunteers that give of their time and their knowledge, and with their dues and financial contributions, help us to educate each other and the public about the value and beauty of this area. Together we are teaching and learning how we can all help to maintain, enhance and protect these waters for future generations.

**MWLA ELECTS OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS AT 27<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**

The Manitowish Waters Lakes Association held its 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 27 at the North Lakeland Discovery Center. During the business portion of the meeting, the following officers were elected for one-year officer terms: Greg Holt, President; Dennis Wilm, Vice President; Angela Dombrowicki, Secretary; and Eleanor Butler, Treasurer. Mike McKeon and Carla Hameister were elected as new directors for a two-year term; returning directors for two-year terms: Tom Kramer, Jody Miller, and Gale Wolf. Karen Dixon will continue as Immediate Past President as Bob Becker has decided to resign from the board. Other members of the board include Paul Puccinelli, Mary Bowlus; Greg Holt; and Delp Schafer.

Board President Bob Becker recognized and thanked departing board member, Bob Stowers, for his many years of service on the board. The membership thanked Bob Becker for his many years of service on the board and for his three years as MWLA president.

The following people and businesses were thanked for their donations to the raffle: Marilyn Gabert/Katherine Dumas, Trout Lake Golf Course, Rustic Roadhouse, Some Nerve Brewing Co., Howling Dog Saloon, Aurora Borealis Restaurant, Village Market Flower Shop; Northwoods Serenity; Remax Realty; True Value Hardware; Tom Ahonen; Townline Sports; Den Hill Photography, Blue Bayou Inn, and MWLA Board of Directors.

**WELCOME TO OUR TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS!**

**Mike McKeon:** My wife Sarah and I grew up in the North shore of Chicago, met at the University of Iowa and raised our three kids in Gurnee, Illinois. As the kids were growing up, we took a weeklong vacation every year to Boulder Junction and stayed at Wildcat Lodge. We all loved the Northwoods and often dreamed about not having to leave on Sunday to head back to the hustle and bustle of Northern Illinois.

Three years ago, with kids all out on their own, we made the leap and moved to, the only place in the Northwoods we would consider living full time, Manitowish Waters! Sarah and I have met many, many great people over the last 3 years and love living in Manitowish Waters and being part of such a great community. We enjoy boating, fishing and hiking with Jack (our 2-year-old Small Munsterlander).

I continue to run my manufacturers' rep business selling custom original equipment manufacturer motors and controls, and my manufacturing plant (Dumore Corporation), with my two partners, that makes custom gearmotors in Mauston, Wisconsin.

We believe in volunteering and serving in our community and will continue to do the best we can for the people of Manitowish Waters, as long as we are able to contribute.

**Carla Biwan Hameister:** My family has owned a place in the Manitowish/Minocqua area my entire life. We spent 25 years at Big Lake before moving to the Manitowish chain in 1990. My parents are on Manitowish Lake and we are on Fawn Lake. I enjoy skiing, surfing, pontooning, waverunning, paddle boarding and riding on the awesome bike trails.

I've been a certified public accountant for over 35 years, currently a shareholder of Huberty CPA's managing the Minocqua and Sheboygan offices. We have been donating services to the MWLA for many years.

My husband owns an architectural firm working throughout Wisconsin. We have two college aged sons who enjoy being at the lake and spending time with family.

I've always been interested in the decisions and operations of the lakes association and decided now was the time to get involved and become more active.

### **2020 MWLA ANNUAL MEETING**

Our 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting will be held at the North Lakeland Discovery Center **on Saturday, July 25, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Please put this date on your calendar!** Sign-in starts at 8:30 a.m. with the business meeting beginning promptly at 9:00 a.m. Breakfast will be provided on arrival and throughout the meeting There will be a short business meeting to elect Directors and Officers followed by an educational program (to be determined).

### **~ THE FALL DRAW DOWN - THE WHEN AND THE WHY ~**

by Greg Holt

**The water level in the Chain above the dam will likely decrease from its current level and reach 8'0" sometime shortly before October 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Then beginning on October 1<sup>st</sup>, the level will be drawn down from 8'0" to reach the final winter level on or before October 31<sup>st</sup>.**

The operation of the Rest Lake Dam is guided by the Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.), a document that was signed in April of 2016 by the Chippewa - Flambeau Improvement Company (Xcel Energy) and the State of Wisconsin. This agreement does not replace the work order that was signed in the 1930's but adds more detail to it. It is a step in the process that attempts to provide some compromises relative to upstream (above the dam) and downstream (below the dam) interests. It also attempts to keep in mind ecological needs and navigational needs both above and below the dam.

To understand the timing of the fall draw down, it is helpful to understand the way the dam is operated in summer. The summer level of the Chain above the dam is actually a range rather than a single specified level. That summer range is 8'0" to 8'6". The Chain has been 8'3" or greater much of the summer. It is also helpful to remember that September is considered part of the summer relative to the M.O.U.

In later September, Xcel energy decreases the level of the water above the dam to be at or near 8'0" by October 1st, which also increases the flow of water below the dam. Per dam records, this occurred between Sept. 28th and Sept. 30th in 2016; between September 27<sup>th</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> in 2017; and on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 the level of the water above the dam was 8'2".

Beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>, the water level is drawn down to reach the winter level by October 31<sup>st</sup>, the date specified in the M.O.U. This operation of the dam in September and October allows the owners of the dam to accomplish a difficult task, to drop 3'6" of water over 4000+ acres of lakes and channels by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Hopefully, this information will be helpful for those who need to keep in mind when they can expect to see some drop of water level above the dam and an increase in water below the dam and plan accordingly.

### **MW TOWN WATER SAFETY COMMITTEE**

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, over a hundred concerned citizens met for a town workshop to discuss concerns and solutions regarding water safety on the Chain. With increasing numbers of boats, with many of them being larger and more powerful, shoreland owners are reporting numerous instances of boaters not following state and local water safety laws and rules. There was consensus in the audience that **education and enforcement** are key to the solution of the concerns expressed.

The Town board members decided to establish a Town Water Safety Committee to address the issues and solutions, then develop a plan for education and enforcement. At the September 10<sup>th</sup> Town Board meeting, a Water Safety Committee was approved with the following people listed as committee members: John Butler, Pat Solar, Carla Hameister, Frank DiLeanardi, Greg Holt, and Dan Stella. The committee is planning to have their first meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>. The MWLA board of directors is working on recommendations to give to the Town Water Safety committee.

### **AIS NEWS**

by Emily Heald, NLDC Water Program Coordinator



**Congratulations to Emily!**

### **Clean Boats Clean Waters program continues to positively influence boater behavior**



Discovery Center Interns Jarod, Nicole, and Eric participated in efforts to spread the word about invasive species at Rest and Clear boat landings. Through this state-funded program, interns interviewed over 500 boats (over 800 people!) – a record breaking year! The Clean Boats, Clean Waters programs helps us to educate boaters on preventing the spread and establishment of aquatic invasive species. It also helps to gather important information regarding boater travel between different lakes, which helps the DNR to prioritize its search and research of aquatic invasive species.

## 2019 fall purple loosestrife update

Summer has come and gone, and so has purple loosestrife season. Purple loosestrife is a wetland invasive plant found in many locations throughout Manitowish Waters, including Rice Creek, the Manitowish River running into Island Lake, Wild Rice Lake, the channel between Spider and Island Lakes, and intermittently on a few of the other lakes in the Chain. It is also found on the Stepping Stone Lakes.

The Discovery Center clips flower heads of purple loosestrife to prevent it from going to seed and spreading to new locations. We also release cello beetles, which eat only purple loosestrife, onto infestation sites. The beetles damage the plant so that it does not grow as tall and produces fewer seeds. This way, native plants have more of a chance to grow back. We saw several areas of beetle damage – they are doing their job!



*Photo is of Discovery Center intern, Jarod Scheff, with an especially large purple loosestrife plant on the Manitowish River.*

## Spiny water flea, a “new” invader to the area

This summer a researcher from UW Madison pulled up a plankton sample from Plum Lake that contained 2 live spiny water fleas. This has been verified by the DNR. At this time, densities are thought to be low, but the lake will require further monitoring. Spiny water fleas are a type of invasive zooplankton that reproduce asexually, so only 1 individual is needed to start a new population. Spiny water fleas also lay resting eggs in the fall, which are contained in lake sediment and are very durable. The resting eggs are often the problem, because many lake users do not know to keep mud off anchors and equipment while moving from lake to lake.

It is difficult to say how long spiny water fleas have been in Plum Lake. Because they are only a quarter of an inch in size, and translucent, finding them can be like finding a needle in a haystack. It makes sense to expect a lag time between when an invasive species such as spiny water flea establishes until it is detected. Spiny water flea is only in 11 inland Wisconsin lakes. In Vilas: Trout (2014), Star (2013), Stormy (2007), Ike Walton (2015), and Butternut (2014). They are also in the Gile Flowage (2003) in Iron County and the Madison Chain of Lakes in Dane County (2009).



Spiny water fleas eat native zooplankton that graze on algae and can therefore change food web dynamics in lakes. If the algae-eaters decline, more algae are expected. Lake Mendota in Madison has seen a loss of nearly 3 feet in water clarity that has been attributed to spiny water flea.

There is currently no known method to control spiny water flea. Prevention and education are key. Per Wisconsin law, boaters are required to inspect boats and equipment for plants and animals, remove what they find, drain all water, and never move live fish. While not required by state law, letting your boat dry for at least 6 hours will effectively kill adult and resting egg spiny water fleas.

If you are certified to be a Clean Boats, Clean Waters watercraft inspector, I urge you to volunteer at your local boat landings to spread the word about invasive species. If you or a group of your members would like to be trained, please let me know and we can find a time to do so.

In an effort to find spiny water fleas as soon as possible, we monitored several lakes on the Chain this summer. We use a small dredge to take bottom sediment samples from the deepest point on the lake. We send the samples to a lab in Madison, where scientists search for broken tail spines within the sediment. We will know the results of our samples in the winter or spring of 2020. We sampled the lakes last year, too, and all were returned negative for presence of spiny water flea.

## New educational videos

One of our summer interns created two new educational videos about AIS this summer. Copy these links into your browser to check them out:

Purple loosestrife: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dt5ILgDllys&t=18s>

Curly-leaf pondweed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-z9B-LFNX8&feature=youtu.be>

## **TOWNSHIP SAVES RESTORATION OF DEAD PIKE LAKE**

by Gale Wolf, Dead Pike Lake Association

After investing \$100,000 in a Lake Management Plan and, along with the Natural Resources Board, granting it formal approval, the DNR balked at implementing its recommendation, i.e. Stabilizing Dead Pike's water level with a simple structure at the lake's outlet.

Enter the Town of Manitowish Waters. Under the leadership of Chairman John Hanson and the support of supervisors Becker and Kramer, the responsibility of ownership and maintenance of this critical structure was assumed by our own citizenry through its local government.

"Much like the controversy with the Chain elevations and the Rest Lake Dam, the people of our Town are rallying in support of our water resources," said Town Chairman Hanson. "It is hoped to be accomplished immediately following the thaw next Spring."

Members of the MWLA should take special pride in this development, seeing that they helped underwrite the independent study leading to the resolution of this pristine lake's water quality problems.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- **Dumping of yard waste into Wisconsin waters is prohibited.** Please dispose of your yard waste appropriately; it should not be dumped into our rivers and lakes! If you see someone raking yard waste into the water, please inform them of the Natural Resources rule below. Contact DNR Warden Rich Thole at 715-605-2130 to report shoreland violations.

NR 30.12 rule: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/30/11/12>

Unless an individual or a general permit has been issued under this section or authorization has been granted by the legislature, no person may do any of the following unless a permit has been acquired:

(a) Deposit any material or place any structure upon the bed of any navigable water where no bulkhead line has been established.

(b) Deposit any material or place any structure upon the bed of any navigable water beyond a lawfully established bulkhead line.

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Check out our website at [www.mwlakes.com](http://www.mwlakes.com) to access board meeting minutes, lakes-related articles, information on aquatic invasive species, past e-newsletters, and many other interesting topics.



[Like Us On Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ManitowishWatersLakesAssociation) or go to <https://www.facebook.com/ManitowishWatersLakesAssociation>

### **The MWLA Board of Directors appreciates your continued support.**

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