

# Windemere Lake and Landowners Association



## WINDOW

"If you want information, just open a window"

Spring 2013

### Letter From the Chair- Chip Wells

My wife and I have owned a cabin on Island Lake since the middle of the 1980's. For years like many of you, we drove up from the cities to enjoy the weekend on the lake. When we retired 6 years ago we decided to sell our house in the cities and move to the lake.

We have been members of our lake association for some time. I was elected to the board two and a half years ago and was elected this past fall to be the chair. In October, the Executive Committee of the Board met to discuss activities for 2013. The following are some of the ideas we discussed.

The board has discussed frequently in the past the need to increase the membership of the lake association. The annual membership over the past few years has remained around 200. This number is only a fraction of the total number of lakeshore property owners. To partially address this issue a group of board members is working on a brochure about the lake association that can be used to encourage lakeshore owners to become members. We have also considered becoming more visible in the community by participating in local parades and festivals, selling Windemere Lake Association logo apparel and otherwise becoming better known.

We have decided to emphasize the work of our Lakes Committee led by Pauline Dee (Sand Lake). Dennis Huddleston (Sturgeon Lake), Ron Hansen (Island Lake), Jerry Blazevic (Sand Lake), and Laurie Patrick (Passenger Lake and other lakes) have agreed to be members of the committee. I have asked Pauline to develop an action plan for this year for each lake that will be presented at the June general meeting with follow up reports at the July and August meetings. If any members have concerns that they would like addressed by the Lakes Committee, please call your lake representative.

The board would like to have more members serve on the board. There are five representatives from Sand, four from Sturgeon, three from Island and one from Passenger. In the past years we have had a total of fourteen to sixteen members. We will have an election at our August general meeting. If you are interested in serving, please contact me or another board member.

According to our bylaws, the board must each year review bylaws and the amount of annual dues. The board will consider both of these items at our spring meeting. I will be reporting on our recommendations at the June general meeting.

There will not be a speaker at our August meeting. After our business meeting we plan on having an open forum with the membership. We will start by reviewing our current committees, meeting format and schedule. We will then move to get your input on issues that you think the lake association should be focusing on in the short and long term. Please think about the association between now and August and bring your ideas and comments to the meeting.

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## Windemere Lake and Landowners Board Members

Sturgeon Lake	Sand Lake	Island Lake	Passenger/Rush/Johnson Lake Eleven
Sandy Schumann 218-390-1141	Pauline Dee 485-8578	Chip Wells 485-8254 or 218-380-0409	Laurie Patrick 651-429-3700
Tom Landsberger 372-3358 or 651-770-3067	Jerry Blazevic 218-628-1651	Ron Hansen 485-8567	
Dennis Huddleston 372-3005	Janette Muller 485-8048	Shirley LaFond 372-4209	
Ron Goettsch 651-423 1991 or 651-675-8648	Barbara Krig 952-474-2041		
	Greg Carlson 485-5784		

## 2013 General Meeting Dates

- ✚ June 8 Our speaker will be Rich Rezanka. Each spring we eagerly await Rich's talk and report of his survey of Sand and Sturgeon lakes as this information determines treatment or no treatment for EWM.
- ✚ July 13 Claire Strandlie will be our speaker on this day. Claire is the chairman of the Windemere Township Board and there are always lots of questions for Claire as he reports on the state of the township.
- ✚ August 10 One of your favorite programs.....What's on Your Mind? Here is your chance to tell us what you want to hear at our L&L meetings. This meeting is also our election of members to the board. We really need some more board members on Island and Sturgeon lakes, so we hope some of you will raise your hand and join us in the care of our lakes.

All meetings are held at Hope Lutheran Church, 204 Elm Avenue, Moose Lake at 9am. Come to hear and learn about your precious lake and have coffee with your neighbors and other lake lovers.

## Lakes Reports.....

Requests for the EWM off-shore permits for treatment on both Sand and Sturgeon lakes have been sent in. The 2013 grant program was ready to send in applications in February. We sent in two applications for off-shore treatment, one each for Sand and Sturgeon lakes. In mid-March, you all should have received a letter from your lake association board about treatment of your lakeshore. At about the same time you should have received information from Lake Management, whom we are using for off-shore treatments on both Sand and Sturgeon lakes. Please pay attention to these mailings.

Island Lake: We have had some more testing done on Island Lake this winter by the A.W. Research Company. We are always trying to determine the causes for the phosphorus load which causes massive algae growth at certain times in Island Lake. The test results are not in yet.



## WHAT IS IT???

Last August, on the north shore of Sand Lake, was found a strange creature attached to a floating stick. It was as large as a woman's closed fist and less yellow than the picture. Upon a quick check with Roger Hugill, our local fisheries guru, we were told it was a Bryozoa colony of creatures between plant and animal. It is also called "moss animal" according to Wikipedia. There are thousands of species in the ocean, but only 1 class is found in freshwater. It is gelatinous mass, it does not sting or bite and is not to be feared. Roger says he gets 2 or 3 calls a year about this phenomenon.

## Thank You to Volunteers

A big thank you goes out to volunteers that we know about and many we don't know about, road picker-uppers, helpers at the brush pile, Secci disk readers, lake level checkers, helpers on the walk-around to name, but a few. Thanks so much! Many hands make light work!



## GET THE LEAD OUT!

No, we are not talking about exercising. We are talking about the lead weights and jigs that are attached to fishing lines. Ever year loons, cranes and other water birds die from lead poisoning. Many of these birds find food on the bottom of the lake and swallow small stones to aid in grinding food. Some of this grit may contain lead. A fish eating bird may be attracted to bait on a hook or swallow a sinker or jig attached to an escaped fish.

### **NOT A SMALL PROBLEM!**

About 2 or 3 percent of the entire North American waterfowl population die annually from lead poisoning. A bird with lead poisoning will have physical and behavioral changes, including gasping, tremors, and impaired ability to fly. Just one single lead sinker or jig can poison a water bird. Some years ago an eagle was found on the shoreline of Sturgeon Lake suffering from lead poisoning. Thanks to concerned lake citizens for contacting the University of Minnesota Raptor Center, who managed to nurse the eagle back to health.

### **LEAD POISONING DOES NOT HAVE TO HAPPEN!**

There are many ecological and inexpensive sound alternatives. Sinkers and jigs can be made from non-poisonous materials such as tin, steel, bismuth, and recycled glass.

### **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

Use non-lead products. Ask your local sporting goods store to stock non-lead tackle. Discard old lead sinkers and jigs properly. Spread the word.

Members can discard old lead tackle at the general meeting. The association will make sure the lead is disposed of properly.

**GOOD IDEA:** If 200 shoreland property owners stopped mowing all the way to edge of the lake, and left a 25 to 50 foot wide un-mowed area along their shoreline during one summer, at least 30 fewer pounds of phosphorous would enter our lakes. And since every pound of phosphorous can produce a thousand to ten thousand pounds of algae, that's a lot less algae in our lakes. *Minnesota Waters*

## PLANNING ON MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR SHORELAND CABIN OR HOME PROPERTY?

By Sam Martin, Water Management Specialist

Have you just purchased your dream home or cabin on the lake or river and plan on making some changes to the lot so it allows you to do all the things you want to do? Have you owned a place on the lake or river and are just now planning to do the things to the lot that you have wanted to do for a long time? Please consider a few things when making your plans. Everything that you do on your property directly affects the lake or river since you are right next to it. Just as you want to enjoy the water, take ownership of it and call it your own. You cannot control what happens on the water, but you can control what happens on your property, which drains right to the water. Why do you own a place on the lake? Is it because you enjoy nature and want to be able to sit at your "slice of heaven" and look across the lake and have in the background a somewhat natural setting with trees and grasses that blend nicely with the water? Then consider what people see when they view your place from the water or from their "slice of heaven". When considering projects, think about what you currently have and if a proposed project would be duplicating what you already have and using up area that could be left natural. If you have a steep slope on your property with a flat area above it, do not mow right up to where the slope begins. Leave five or ten feet not mowed and maybe even consider planting a buffer in that area. Slowing the water down before it gets to the slope will help reduce erosion on the slope. It will also allow some of the water to infiltrate into the ground before it reaches the slope. If you mow the slope, consider not mowing it and even planting native grasses, flowers, shrubs or trees. Their long roots will help stabilize the slope. Leaving a five to ten foot buffer at the bottom of the slope will also help slow the water down before it reaches the water body.

If your shoreline is not eroding and does not have riprap on it, please consider leaving it as it is and not mowing it or adding native plants. Have the natural buffer right next to the lake and have your fire pit and sitting area behind it. Dig the fire pit into the ground so the ashes cannot be washed into the lake. Natural buffers, whether allowed to grow or planted and then maintained, contain native plants that have long roots that help hold the shoreline in place. They also filter water coming off your property and allow some of it to infiltrate the ground before it reaches the lake or river. Riprap attracts the sun and unnaturally heats up the water. It also creates a barrier between where the water and land meet. This area is called the ribbon of life as 90% of the animals live in this area. Manicured lawn and riprap greatly reduce the habitat for the animals that call this area home. Most people with shoreland property want to swim. This often means removing the "weeds" in front of their place to make for good swimming. If necessary, remove some of the "weeds" so you can swim and enjoy the water. Consider that those "weeds" are habitat for fish. If they are emergent, those "weeds" also can help hold your shoreline in place by reducing the waves that reach the bank. Down trees in the water also make good fish habitat.

By all means enjoy the shoreland property that you have worked hard to acquire. Just consider what your lot is like now and some of the things you may have planned and whether or not they are good for the body of water you enjoy. There are often ways to do what you want to and still do what is good for the lake or river. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 320-216-4242.

### WHAT IS A WETLAND?

A wetland is a term used to describe a variety of wet environments from a slight depression that holds water after a spring runoff to a forested swamp with mucky soils. Some wetlands are easy to identify because of standing water or vegetation, others are not, such as a wetland dominated by poplar (quaking aspen).

Federal standards define a wetland as, saturated with water either above the soil surface or just below it, and covered by vegetation adapted to wet soil conditions. Federal standards use three parameters to determine what is a wetland; water (hydrology), wetland (hydric) soil and wetland plants (hydrophytes).

Wetland vegetation includes ground covers (herbaceous vegetation), shrubs and trees. The following are just a few of the wetland plants (hydrophytes) found in Pine County. Canada bluejoint grass, reed canary grass, sedges, pinkweed, jewelweed, giant goldenrod, swamp thistle, ostrich, cinnamon and sensitive fern, red raspberry, common elderberry, glossy buckthorn, red-osier and silky dogwood, alder, willows, poplar, red and silver maple, swamp white oak, yellow birch, elm, green and black ash, white cedar.

Pine County is a large county consisting of 917,147 acres, of this 279,000 acres are wetlands. The percentage of Pine County that is wetland is 30.42%. Wetlands serve a variety of functions and value beneficial to the public and environment. The degree to which a wetland serves these functions depends on the hydrology, soil, vegetation, size and location of the wetland in the landscape. Although a wetland may not serve all functions, each wetland works in combination with other wetlands as part of a complex integrated system. Wetlands provide flood storage, ground water recharge and discharge; they act as filters and control erosion for cleaner water and lakes and provided fishery and wildlife habitat, plus recreation and income for specialized industries. Because wetland have so many functions and values the goal of wetland protection is to ensure no net loss of wetlands. Federal laws regulated through the US Army Corps of Engineers, as well as Minnesota's Wetland Conservation Act of 1991 are in place to protect wetlands from negative impacts including filling, draining and excavation. Wetland protection is the realization of the importance of wetlands to the environment and economy.

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