

waves

Newsletter of the Lake Washington Improvement Association

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A Note from the LWIA President

Hello Lake Washington Association Members! Another amazing summer on Lake Washington has come to an end. Our docks, boats, and lifts are getting put away, and anticipation for the summer of 2024 is in the back of our minds. As we head into fall and winter, the lake will go from waves to hard water. We want to stress to all during this transition to ice fishing/skating/ATV/snowmobiling to be cautious before venturing out. Each year we see many areas of uneven ice. Please be safe on the ice!!

The LWIA has had another productive year. Many of those items were highlighted at our Annual Meeting held in August at Kiwanis Camp Patterson. One new exciting endeavor is the review and monitoring of Lake Washington itself. Until recently, we have focused on the waters entering our lake and opportunities to clean/treat that. Now we are also focusing on monitoring what is in the lake. This monitoring will allow us to craft a plan to treat the water quality elements in the lake. We all should understand that the water quality of the lake is determined by many factors, so we continue to look for a variety of partnering opportunities with Le Sueur Soil and Water and we are leveraging our funds to secure grant money to fund improvement projects.

I would encourage any of you Lake Association Members to reach out to our LWIA Board Members with ideas or goals we should consider. We encourage collaboration with our members to help us build relationships and achieve success. Next summer we hope to have some new fun ideas to bring to our Lake. Enjoy your fall and winter days on our beautiful Lake Washington!! - Jason Femrite

Lakers Taking Action

Here are two examples of proactive lake residents: the **Gostomczyk** family tiled and planted cover crops on 200 acres adjacent to the county park and north of the outlet. The 3-acre lot owned by **Mary Kammerdiener** that has been farmed by **Tim Biehn** will now be seeded with native grasses. Both projects will filter phosphorous and other chemicals before they reach the lake.

Lakers: Karen Wright



Karen Wright hosts the *Morning Show* on KMSU 89.7. The daily show includes music and interviews. In this episode of *Lakers*, we turn the tables and ask Karen to answer our questions.

What is your history on the Lake?

My husband, Jeff Pribyl, and I bought a lake house on Sioux Lane in December 2016. It is our cabin "Up North" (14.2 miles north of our home in Mankato).

What is your history in broadcasting?

I started out in television, working at KEYC-TV (Mankato), KMSP-TV (now Fox 9), and KARE-11-TV. I also did stints in radio at WIXK, KEEZ (Z-99), and have been at KMSU 89.7 FM since 2005.

Do you have a favorite interview?

I have interviewed thousands of people in my career. I find that everyone I interview is interesting. That's one of the best parts of my job. I meet new people and learn new things every day! That said, my top bucket-list interview was with Olivia Newton-John whom I have adored since I was a young girl. Not only did I love her music, but I also loved her altruism.

On your radio show, Minnesota Morning, you include a variety of nature-focused programs. I have several segments that align with my interest in nature, gardening, and leaving the world a better place. These include *Birding with Batt*, Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. featuring humorist/author/bird guy, Al Batt, and *Every Day is Earth Day* on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. with local to international guests who talk about climate change, conservation, renewable energy, and sustainability. I also co-host a gardening segment on Friday mornings with Master Gardener, Barb Lamson. It's because of Barb that I became a Master Gardener in 2016!

What can residents do to their yards and gardens to improve lake quality?

I have tried three things. First, I planted Miniclover in my lawn. It reduces soil erosion, produces nitrogen (so you don't have to fertilize), feeds pollinators, and is good for the environment. With clover, you can expect a green lawn all year long with little to no watering needed. Second, in 2019, I received a Lawns to Legumes grant from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources to establish a shoreline buffer of native plants. The native plants have long roots which help improve water quality by filtering out excess nutrients before they enter the lake. The plants also help stabilize the shoreline and help prevent erosion. Finally, I have reduced the turfgrass in my yard by 50% and have established pollinator gardens in its place.

If you had background music (or baseball "at-bat" song), what would it be?

Olivia Newton-John's *Don't Stop Believin'*. A song of hope; of never giving up.

Should we Create a Lake Improvement Tax District?

Many MN lake communities are creating Lake Improvement Districts. These districts allow a board of directors comprised of residents, to suggest a supplemental property tax inside the district. The revenue is used to fight invasive species and protect water quality. This might be an interesting option for Lake Washington. As things are, only 40 % of lake residents are members of the LWIA. This means 40% of lake residents pay for the benefits that 100% of the residents receive. A lake district would allow us to lower our dependence on pull tab revenue, cut LWIA dues, and most importantly, fund large-scale clean-up projects (alum treatments, algae harvesting, etc.). The LWIA is just starting to talk about an improvement district, so nothing is set in stone. Before it could happen, a majority of residents would have to approve a district. Let the LWIA Board know what you think.

A New Direction for LWIA - Down

The LWIA has completed a variety of projects designed to reduce pollutants flowing into the lake from the watershed. We are glad to report that we have had some success. Now we will be turning our attention to the lake bottom. Over 100 years of runoff has left sediment in the lake bottom that is rich in phosphorus. Wave action and carp activity stirs up the lake bottom and water in the deeper holes loses oxygen as the summer progresses. These processes contribute to the release of phosphorus back into the water, which in turn, feeds algae growth. We are working with ISG to study the feasibility of a variety of lake treatment options. For instance, some lake associations have had success using alum to encapsulate phosphorus. Others have removed carp. Another possibility is to temporarily lower the level of the lake and dredge the bottom. We are not sure which, if any, course of action we will take, but managing the lake bottom would have a positive effect on water clarity.

Algae Harvesting



Ever found yourself staring at the green lake and thinking, 'Wouldn't it be great if we could strain all that algae out of the water?' Well, a Florida-based company, AECOM, had the same idea and they created an algae harvesting machine. It's in the early phases of development, but the results are promising. The company is **interested in testing the equipment on Lake Washington next summer**. The process not only clarifies the lake water but provides biomass that can be used for fuel, livestock feed, and fertilizer. The photo above shows the harvesting system in use on an Ohio lake.

Alum Treatments

In the photo on the right, St. Paul Capital Region Watershed District applies liquid alum (aluminum sulfate) to a Twin Cities lake. As the chemical settles, it binds with phosphorus in the water, and it covers phosphorus on the bottom of the lake. This prevents phosphorus from being consumed by algae. This could be an option for Lake Washington. It's an effective, non-toxic treatment.



Annual Meeting

The annual LWIA meeting (right) was held in August in the lodge at Camp Patterson. If you've never made it to one of the meetings, we would love to see you there. You will meet lake residents, vote on LWIA business, and learn about developments in lake restoration.



LWIA Projects Underway



Stabilizing Grade. Grade stabilization involves building structures to control a natural or artificial head cut on the landscape. This method generally includes compacting earthen structures with pipe and structure controls to safely convey water. The goal of the practice is to reduce sediment delivery and erosion on the landscape.



Building Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCOB). Water and sediment basins use an embankment across the slope of a field or gully/waterway to temporarily retain water and remove sediment from the water flow. Like a terrace, a WASCOB controls flow and stabilizes steep landscapes which prevent erosion and sediment delivery.



Planting Cover Crops. Cover crops use seasonal grasses, legumes, or forbs to provide vegetative cover on the landscape during bare or unplanted row crop periods. Erosion is greatly reduced with the practice as the soil is less susceptible to wind and water erosion.



Creating Wetlands + Sediment Basins. Wetland and sediment basins provide a depressional area that retain water and sediment. An outlet is constructed with earthen embankments, a hydraulic structure, or a combination of the two. The goal of this practice is to trap sediment/nutrients and then to release clean water into streams.



Maintaining Clinton and Krenik Ponds. Pond maintenance removes accumulated sediment in detention ponds to revive sediment removal capacities. Sediment and nutrients captured in the pond are land applied and the original design and function of the ponds is revived to its maximum holding capacity.



In all, LWIA is supporting six wetland enhancement projects, one intake water monitoring program, and we are in the planning phase for an in-lake project that could involve alum dosing, weed harvesting, partial lake drawdown, dredging, and rough fish management. Thanks to ISG for all their help with the projects.

From Our History Book



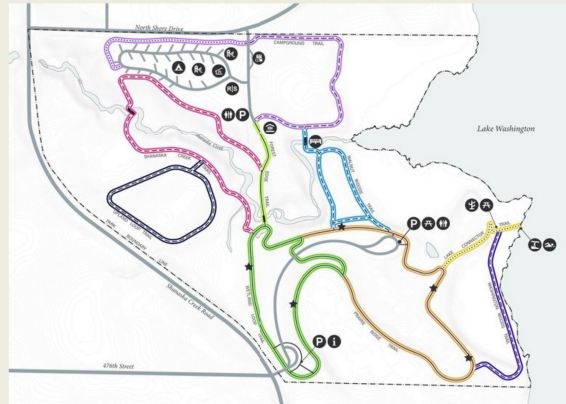
Squirrels Nest Point Resort

The point was home to resorts for over 120 years. Pat Sheehan's Red Squirrels Nest Hotel (1892), and then Squirrels Nest Point resort (1970s, left) served day visitors and vacationers. The resort's central lodge now serves as the boathouse for the condominiums.

We printed another batch of books. Let Dan Sachau know if you would like one. You can receive a book for a \$30 donation to the LWIA. Daniel.Sachau@mnsu.edu

Lake Washington County Park

If you have not yet visited the extension to the Lake Washington County Park, it's time to do so. The county added paved trails, a new bridge, and fitness equipment. An expanded lake access area is on the way.



The Connor family from St. Peter enjoys a walk on the new trails.



2024 Penguin Plunge!

February 10th Westwood. Noon.

Fundraiser For The YMCA

Sponsor a Dipper. Join us for the Auction,
Food and Music



Connect with LWIA

Mailing Address: Lake Washington Improvement Association. PO Box 3162, Mankato, MN 56002

Website: lakewashingtonmn.com

Facebook: facebook.com/lwiamn/

Do we have your email address? If not, we would love to get it because email is the fastest and most economical way to reach you. You can email lwiabookkeeper@gmail.com

Monthly Meetings: LWIA Board Meetings are held at the Lake Washington County Park on the third Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m. Join us.

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