



Lakeside News

FALL & WINTER 2016

LAKE WISSOTA IMPROVEMENT AND PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Association Membership 8
Celebrate the Chippewa River Conference 1
Construction Update
County Highway X 2
Kamp Kenwood 6
Lake Wissota History 5
Membership Application 6
Moon Bay Study Group 4
New Board Members 7
President's Compass 2
The Right Plants 4
Upcoming Events 2
Wisconsin Lakes Partnership . . . 7



WEDNESDAY
Jan. 11
LWIPA Board Meeting
6:30 pm • Lafayette Town Hall

Celebrate the Chippewa River Conference

EMILY LIND, BEAVER CREEK CITIZEN SCIENCE CENTER

On September 9, 2016, the third annual **Celebrate the Chippewa River Conference** was held at the Heyde Center for the Arts in Chippewa Falls. Using grant funds from Xcel Energy, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), along with special donations from the local Sierra Club Chapter, and Citizens United for

continued on page 3

County Highway X Bridge Opening

BY ANN GORDON

Late afternoon on October 21, the County Highway X Bridge opened to traffic. Businesses and residents were happy to have this happen and to have the summer detour disappear. Approximately 75 people showed up to celebrate the occasion.

The bridge has two 12 foot lanes with 14 foot shoulders. In addition, there is a 12 foot two way bike lane on the north side of the bridge. The bridge was funded with 80% federal money and 20% county money.

We hope you enjoy your continued travels along Highway X. 🍷



President's Compass

MARY JO FLEMING

Lake Wissota approaches its 100th year in 2017, and LWIPA and the other lake organizations are preparing for the celebration. 2016, however, was also eventful. We had a record rainfall that impacted some boats and shore stations, produced noticeable bank erosion upstream, and added debris to the lake. We tried not to let the X-bridge closing slow us down, but we also acknowledge that it had an impact on our community. Our Clean Boats Clean Waters intern reported half the number of encounters with boaters at the Lafayette landing. Fewer powerboats encouraged more kayakers and paddle-boarders on the little lake, but businesses suffered. Half way through the summer my exasperated husband reminded me that we weren't personally responsible for keeping restaurants afloat, and that kitchens were included in houses for a reason. Local businesses are important to our community, and we urge lake folks to continue to support them.

We used our year to continue projects that impact the lake such as: planting a demonstration buffer shade garden, volunteering to help Leinies' Canoes for a Cause plant trees in the Little Lake Wissota watershed, assessing aquatic plant concerns, holding neighborhood coffees, and sponsoring a day-long lake leadership seminar for Chippewa County organizations. LWIPA helped sponsor the Celebrate the Lower Chippewa conference which was, again, very informative. I urge you to attend this yearly conference since we are part of the Chippewa system. The LWIPA board and interested members have spent part of October and November in weekly meetings with a UW-Extension facilitator as we review and adopt a strategic plan for the future of our lake association.

Next year promises to be even busier as we begin the lake's second century. My wish for the new year is to put political differences aside and join in protecting our lakes, rivers, and ground water; air and soil; forests and wildlife. Until recently it's been a proud Wisconsin legacy. Wisconsin's resources are OUR heritage. 🍷



UPCOMING EVENTS

Wed., Jan. 11: 6:30 pm

LWIPA Board Meeting
Lafayette Town Hall

Thurs., March 9

Red Cedar Watershed Conference
(Land, Water and People Coming together) - UW-Stout

April 5-7

Wisconsin Lakes Partnership
Convention - Stephens Point

Wed., April 12: 7:00 pm

LWIPA Annual meeting
Lafayette Town Hall (tentative)

Sat. June 24

LWIPA Annual Picnic, Lion's Pavilion,
Lafayette Township (tentative)

Sat., July 29

Lake Wissota Centennial Celebration,
Lake Wissota State Park

The online calendar is located at
www.lwipa.net/calendar



PHOTO BY JAKE RING

“Chippewa River Conference” continued from cover

Shoreline Protection, over 65 conference attendees were able to spend the day at several breakout sessions on various river related topics. Some of the highlights from the day included a live eagle presentation with Scott Mehus, Education Director at the National Eagle Center in Waubasha, Minnesota, local historian Jim Alf shared humorous stories from his days as a ferryman, UW-Eau Claire Geographer Doug Faulkner presented his research on Reed Canary Grass and the effect it has on active channel flow, and several other speakers presented on a host of interesting topics too long to list here. The Chippewa County Historical Society Mobile Lumbering Museum was also on display for visitors to peruse. A delicious lunch was catered by Lucy’s Deli, and the day wound down with live music by Paul Tweed Band and beverages from the Heyde Center bar.

The conference was set to continue on Saturday, September 10 with opportunities to recreate on the river, and get together with fellow community members at Phoenix Park for other fun activities. Unfortunately due to high rainfall the days leading up to the event, the river was too high to paddle, bank fish, and the WDNR was unable to shock fish and bring them to shore for observation (the shocking does not hurt the fish). Fortunately the high water levels couldn’t stop the guided bike tour lead by Doug Faulkner (UW-Eau Claire), and Jeremy Gragert (Wisconsin Bike Fed). Over 20 bicyclists joined the ride, learning about the geography, geology, and history of the Lower Chippewa River.

Many great folks from several organizations were on the planning committee and helped make the event possible. A huge thank you goes out to Beaver Creek Reserve Citizen Science Center, WDNR, Xcel Energy, Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association, Sierra Club, Lower Chippewa River Alliance, Chippewa Valley Museum, Heyde Center for the Arts, UW-Eau Claire, and UW Extension.

This event brings awareness, appreciation, and a vigorous appetite to conserve the wonderful biological resource we all share that is the Chippewa River. So many waterbodies in the state are threatened by invasive species and poor water quality. Here in the Chippewa Valley we are fortunate to have a river that is biologically diverse, and that offers such a myriad of recreational opportunities. Goals for the future include a 2017 conference, but it can’t happen without support from the community. We are seeking new sponsors, new partners, and additional folks to serve on the planning committee to help widen the demographic of conference attendees, and engage more of the community in river related activities. If you would like to donate to the 2017 conference, or serve on the planning committee, please contact Emily Lind, Citizen Science Technician at Beaver Creek Reserve. Emily@beavercreekreserve.org. ☞

PHOTO: Over 20 bicyclists joined the guided bike ride on Saturday, learning about the geography, geology, and history of the Lower Chippewa River.



The Right Plants in the Right Places

MARY JO FLEMING

When a lakeshore owner and LWIPA member came to us with a landscaping problem last fall, the board decided to help her find a solution that would also allow us to experiment with native plants for shady shorelands. Another compelling reason to help Rexann Lemke install buffer plants was the naturally sloping land that led to a section of the little lake designated as a critical habitat area.

Over the winter we placed an order for native plants from Prairie Nursery that would do well in dry, sandy soil and shady to semi-shady locations. We chose Pennsylvania sedge, a 6-inch grass-like plant; white, big-leaf and woodland asters; hay-scented and marginal wood ferns; anise-scented goldenrod, meadowrue and downy wood mint; and northern bush honeysuckle as the dominant plants. We also added wild geranium, columbine, Jacob's ladder, and Solomon's seal. Rexann prepped the site in the fall with eight layers of newspaper and two inches of mulch.

In May, the plant crew — Mary Jo Fleming, Kerry Ingraham, Rexann and her very nimble and hard-working young grand-daughter—planted flats of plant plugs right through the mulch. The young plants were well-cared for, and we had a lovely summer for plant growth. Native plants usually spend the first year developing deep roots that improve and hold soil. We will get a picture next summer for our website. ☘

MOON BAY STUDY GROUP

BY DIANE HENDRY

Did you know that “Lake” Wissota is not a lake at all? To be absolutely correct, maybe the name should be Wissota Impoundment. Many of you know that the “lake” was created in 1917 by damming the Chippewa River. A watershed of over 5,000 square miles allows not only the Chippewa River, but also the Yellow River and Paint, Stillson and Frederick creeks to flow into the lake.

As a result, these waterways deposit vast amounts of sediment and phosphorous into the lake causing excessive plant growth, algal blooms, shallow bays and toxic blue-green algae. As temperatures rise, vegetation increases so much so that paddlers can barely cross Upper Moon Bay in their canoes and kayaks.

Some members of the LWIPA wanted to find out what their neighbors' thoughts were and if they too had water quality concerns. Thus began the “Moon Bay Coffee Meetings” attended by 40 households. Neighbors voiced concerns about the last several decades of impaired water conditions. Swimming is no longer advised in many sections of the lake by late July, early August due to unhealthy water conditions. It is difficult to fish some sections of the bays where the vegetation is so thick. Paddlers echoed concerns mentioned earlier. We talked about the importance of creating buffer zones to prevent erosion.

From the “study groups”, as they became more formally known, a weed-harvesting activity was initiated. More shoreline owners got word of the LWIPA activity and joined the effort of pulling invasive plants and thick native vegetation, as well as learning to identify plant species with the scientific guidance of our experts working along with us.

Most importantly, the more we talk together, the more we realize the significance of Lake Wissota to our Wisconsin way of life. LWIPA members, coffee meetings with neighbors, and others who share concerns about the deterioration of this impoundment, have come up with a few action items: Form a Yellow River/Moon Bay Coalition; use Little Lake Wissota Stewardship Project as a pilot program for future lake progress; partner with the farming community, business owners, lakeshore owners and local government agencies to work toward solutions to stop the lake's degenerative direction before it is too late to turn around negative impacts.

You can learn more about the work of the LWIPA at www.lwipa.net and please join us for a meeting at the Lafayette Town Hall (see the calendar on page 2) and let your voice be heard too. ☘



On February 22, 1916, Mr. Kellogg, President of Kellogg Engineering & Construction Co. invited the businessmen of Chippewa Falls out for a dinner and a view of the Wissota Dam construction work.

When Lake Wissota Was 60 Years Old

BY RALPH CHRISTOFFERSON, CHIPPEWA HERALD-TELEGRAM 2-3-78

The Kellogg Construction Co. built housing facilities for workmen on the flat hill overlooking Paint Creek Rapids where the Power House is located. I carried Sunday papers out to the men by walking out from Chippewa along the old Soo Line tracks. Usually a thriving business was done because many of the men had Sunday off. Bunkhouses were steam heated which was a wonder to me — and they felt cozy and warm after trudging to the dam site in below zero weather. One bitter cold Sunday stands out in my mind. It was below zero and a cold wind was whistling through the boulder-strewn canyon, which was the river channel. (The cofferdam had diverted the water of the Chippewa River into the channel below the spillways — there was an island in the river near where the powerhouse is located — channels were on both sides of the island — I used to hunt rabbits on the island). On the bitter day mentioned above, a foreman wanted a volunteer to go down into the very cold river bottom to do some important work. The men were comfortable in their steam heated quarters so no one wanted to volunteer. Finally he located one man who seemed willing but the fellow said "I don't have enough warm clothes to go down there today." Without hesitation the boss stripped off his full-length fur lined overcoat and gave it to the volunteer. The incident really impressed me and I have remembered it vividly for 62 years. The generosity of the foreman was one thing — but letting a worker wear his expensive overcoat while doing rough work was another.

John Myrman related the following anecdote to me: In the winter of 2015, Mr. Kellogg, President of Kellogg Engineering & Construction Co. invited the businessmen of Chippewa Falls out for a dinner and a view of the construction work. He informed the men, at the dinner, that his company had now harnessed the "Mighty Chippewa River" with the "Coffer Dam" they built.

Erick Myrman, John's Dad, told Mr. Kellogg after the meeting, "You don't know what the Mighty Chippewa can do. That cofferdam you have built, will go out next spring like a broken up penny matchbox!" And it did!

I remember very well when the coffer dam was ruptured because Dad

salvaged some of the fine square timbers which were 8 to 10 inches thick — Dad was never completely forgiven by me for pressing me into doing this chore on my birthday while wading in cold river water in May.

The United States entered World War I during the time the dam was being built. I hunted in the woods on the north-west side of the river near the dam and trapped in the spring water, which gushed from the hills in the same area.

When some workmen saw men — a tall gangling youth — they said, "Why aren't you at the front?" (In service) They didn't realize that I was only 15 years old at the time.

Armed guards were stationed at the dam during the first Great War. One winter day a rifle toting guard came down to where I was checking some sets, He said, "What in the heck are you doing?" When he was satisfied that I was not an enemy he told me to go on about my business but suggested that I should stay away a healthy distance away from the dam, itself — which I did.

Some trappers had sets near the edge of Lake Wissota as it was rising in 1916 and early 1917 but to their dismay and mine a sudden rise of the water completely covered the traps and they were, forever, lost. Some of mine are, probably, resting in the muck of the lake bottom in the swamp near where the Soo Line crossed Paint Creek. ⚓

Join LWIPA Today! 2016-17 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

YES, PLEASE SEND NEWSLETTERS AND
OTHER NOTICES BY E-MAIL.

ENCLOSE CHECK FOR \$20 PAYABLE TO:
LAKE WISSOTA IMPROVEMENT AND
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

MAIL TO:
LAKE WISSOTA IMPROVEMENT AND
PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 903
CHIPPEWA FALLS, WI 54729



KAMP KENWOOD SHORELAND PROJECT

BY BRIAN HENDERSON, WFU KAMP KENWOOD FACILITIES MANAGER
IN COOPERATION WITH BARB BARRICKMAN

Take a sandy, neglected appearing beach devoid of any vegetation with deep eroded furrows leading to the waters of the Yellow River, and in its place create a functional beach area, eliminate the erosion and, along the way, make it look beautiful. That was the challenge facing Wisconsin Farmers Union (WFU) at the Kamp Kenwood beach last year.

To be sure, the problems they faced were more than aesthetic. They were beginning to risk undermining the foundation of the staff cabin, guests using the beach were being challenged to walk in areas without eroded edges, and with each rain storm the remaining soil was being washed into the Yellow River. A complete solution was needed that would improve the access to the water, eliminate the erosion, and improve the aesthetics of the beach.

The solution began with a meeting of the minds. WFU Executive Director Tom Quinn, Education Director Cathy Statz and Facilities Manager Brad Henderson hashed out the needs (and wants) for the improved beach. Then they approached Chippewa County Zoning to find out what constraints had to be adhered to. After incorporating these inputs, the design was completed. Next they required the assistance of a contractor capable of moving the earth and placing new plants and mulch. Add Down To Earth Landscaping, and the team was ready for action.

First, a berm was placed to restrict run-off and allow rainfall to seep into the ground. Next, large granite boulders from near Thorp, WI were

LWIPA BOARD MEMBERS

Mary Jo Fleming, President
Ann Gordon, Vice President
Bob Wierman, Secretary
Ed Hebert, Treasurer

Diane Hendry
Seth Gebauer
Chuck Card
Jim Erickson

Kerry Ingraham
Barb MacNaughton-Bernhardt
Jim Schuh
Tony Schuster

Newsletter Contributors:

Mary Jo Fleming, Ann Gordon,
Barb Harriman, Brian Henderson,
Diane Hendry, Emily Lind,
Elly Rochester, and Jim Schuh

"Kamp Kenwood" continued from page 6

strategically placed in a horseshoe to keep back the soil and provide impromptu seating near the water. Mulch and plants (including White and Purple Veronica, Helenium, Karl Forester and Red Bergenia) were placed in the mulch to hold the surface in place. Lastly, at the beginning of each pier, a large flat stone was placed to stabilize the dock and make walking on (and jumping from) the pier less wobbly.

The work was performed in April 2017 and in August, during a meeting with other lakes association members at Kamp Kenwood, the following observation was made: "What do we see when we visit the beach now? Large beautiful rocks stabilize the sandy soil and flowers' and plants' roots anchor the mulch across the top edge. The movement of the grasses in the wind and colorful blooms and pollinators attracted to the plants catch our interest. Gorgeous wide stairs invite you down to the sandy beach from the camp and from the water invite you into the camp. Rock paths lead to the docks allowing easy and safe access to the water for campers and boaters. The erosion has been stopped and it's beautiful! Functional art at its best!" ♣

Meet Our New Board Members

This year two very experienced members of the LWIPA Board retired: Bob Allen who served as our treasurer for many years, and Ralph Bellore, who was our Membership Chair, also for many years. We will miss them.

We have two very qualified new Board members that we would like to introduce you to.

Diane Hendry is retired and lives in a home on Upper Moon Bay. She worked for the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 14 years. She was responsible for environmental education, improving and designating aquatic and terrestrial trails, volunteer coordination and community relations. Diane loves to kayak.

Seth Gebauer owns and operates the SandBar and Grill with his wife of eleven years, Katie. They have two children. They all love to boat, fish, travel and fish. He is the first business owner to be a member of our Board and we welcome his business experience. ♣

Membership in LWIPA is open to any individual, family, business or organization that subscribes to the purposes of the Association.

Your dues will be used to support our continuing educational and environmental projects. Membership dues are \$20 per household and are now being accepted for 2016. Please complete the form in this newsletter and include with your check. In addition to the benefits listed above, you will receive periodic newsletters including information on quarterly and annual meetings, invitations to volunteer for committees, and notices of events. ♣



Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention 2016

MARY JO FLEMING

At this year's Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention (sponsored by Wisconsin Lakes, UW Extension and DNR), LWIPA representatives Mary Jo Fleming, Kerry Ingraham, and Barb MacNaughton-Bernhardt were invited to attend a special session on community capacity building. Governmental bodies, lake-based organizations, businesses and lake users all make up a community, and everyone is needed to maintain Lake Wissota as a valuable resource. Better water quality would meet the shared needs of the community: economic, health, tourism, recreation, aesthetics, and community pride. One thing that we have learned over the years is that lakeshore owners and our lake association do not have the power and resources to affect change on our own. Part of the lake association's mission is to reach out to the broader community, educate them on the issues, identify a common vision among stakeholders, and try to put together a coalition to solve problems affecting the future of the lake. ♣

Sponsor a Newsletter

The LWIPA newsletter is mailed to almost 1100 residents on the lake, regardless of whether they are members of the organization or not—an informed, concerned populace is key to the health of Lake Wissota. This makes the newsletter an effective place for area businesses to reach a special target audience. Would you like to help sponsor the newsletters in the future? Please contact board member Ann Gordon at (715) 723-2647 to learn more details. ♣

LWIPA



P.O. Box 903 | Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
www.lwipa.net | lwipa.blogspot.com

FALL&WINTER 2016

Help us
build our
organization
into an
effective voice
for Lake Wissota

Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association Membership

The Board of Directors of the Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association invite you to help us build our organization into an effective voice for Lake Wissota. We are an important advocate for the lake community, and we intend to grow in our ability to represent our members' concerns, values, and needs. If we are to succeed, **we need your participation.**

Our current projects and future growth need your input and financial support. The LWIPA provides:

- Information on legislation and zoning changes that affect the lake and lakeshore
- Advice on low-maintenance plants that can help stabilize the shoreland and lake bank
- Strategies for dealing with aquatic plant benefits, problems, and management
- Lake use and safety programs
- Recommendations for encouraging wildlife
- Networking opportunities with others who might help solve lake property problems
- Representation on governmental committees that impact the lake
- Resources and events that can increase awareness and foster participation in our lake community