

Lakeside News

SPRING & SUMMER 2016

LAKE WISSOTA IMPROVEMENT AND PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

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The Bald Eagle is the only eagle unique to North America

Bald Eagles— A Success Story

BARB MACNAUGHTON-BERNHARDT

One of the benefits of living in West-Central Wisconsin, on or near water, is the opportunity for bald eagle watching. You may see them flying over a water body looking for fish, perched on a branch next to a lake or river, in a nest high in a white pine, eating a dead deer or other animal carcass, or in the ice where it meets open water.

continued on page 3

WEDNESDAY

Apr. 13

LWIPA Annual Meeting

7:00 pm • Lafayette Town Hall

See details on page 2

WEDNESDAY

Apr. 13

LWIPA Annual Meeting

7:00 pm • Lafayette Town Hall

Program:

**Investing in
Lake Wissota's Future:
Lessons Learned from Lakes
Tainter and Menomin**

Presented by:

Tom Quinn

Wisconsin Farmers' Union

Ron Verdon, President
of the Tainter Menomin
Lake Improvement Association

To exercise the right to vote at the Annual Meeting, dues for the membership year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2016) must be paid prior to or at the meeting. The agenda will include the election to the board, updates on activities, and opportunities for comments by members.



President's Compass

MARY JO FLEMING

LWIPA members have had a busy winter making plans for 2016. Board members and involved lake association members have been attending meetings, going to conferences, hosting coffees, and planning events. Our aim is to bring lake and community folks together to start talking about solutions to Lake Wissota's water quality issues as she nears her 100th birthday in 2017. The "Old Girl" is looking mighty green, especially in bays and backwaters.

A new project this year is the formation of a Moon Bay/Yellow River Coalition of concerned lakeshore owners who are drawing attention to water affected by pollutant-loading in the Yellow River. Barb Barrickman and Diane Hendry have hosted coffees to bring neighbors together. Other groups such as Kamp Kenwood are interested in working with us to increase the number of summer days that are safe for swimming. This is going to require cooperation between land owners up the Yellow River and lake users throughout the county.

LWIPA has again contracted with Beaver Creek to supply a Clean Boats Clean Waters intern who will be interacting with boaters at Lafayette landing on Saturdays and Lake Wissota State Park landing on Sundays.

We invite lake owners to participate in some of the events scheduled for this year. The annual meeting will have several speakers who have had experience with Lakes Tainter/Menomin and the efforts to improve water quality in the Red Cedar Watershed. Their endeavors are a model that we can follow. Supporting the Open House at Lake Wissota State Park on June 5 will give attendees a chance to view our waters up close as they test canoes, kayaks, and other quiet sports equipment. On June 25, LWIPA will host a picnic at the Lions' Club Pavilion. It's an opportunity to meet neighbors and board members over a free lunch. On September 9 and 10, the second annual Celebrate the Lower Chippewa River will be held (see article on page 4).

Last, there is an upcoming county board election. Take the time to make sure that your candidate of choice is knowledgeable about issues that affect our lake and is willing to work with us to improve water quality.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 30-April 1

Wisconsin Lakes Partnership
Convention, Stevens Point, WI

Wed., April 13: 7:00 pm

LWIPA Annual Meeting
Lafayette Town Hall

Wed., May 11: 6:30 pm

LWIPA Board Meeting
Lafayette Town Hall

Wed., June 8: 6:30 pm

LWIPA Board Meeting (Tentative)

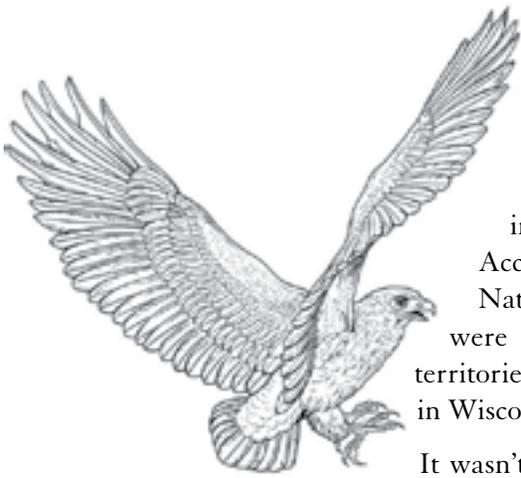
Sun., June 5: 1:00-4:00 pm

Lake Wissota State Park
Open House

Sat., June 25: 11:00 am-2:00 pm

LWIPA Annual Picnic, Lion's Club
Pavilion, Lafayette Town Hall

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



“Bald Eagles” continued from cover

The Upper Mississippi River Valley is one of the best places in the country to observe eagles.

According to the Department of Natural Resources, in 2012 there were 1,337 known bald eagle nest territories occupied by breeding adults in Wisconsin.

It wasn't always like this. Eagles were abundant in Wisconsin until the 1800s when immigrants settled the state. Their population declined as habitat disturbance and destruction occurred, as well as eagles being shot because they threatened livestock. Their population declined until they were protected by the Migratory Bird Act of 1916 and the Bald Eagle Protection Act of 1940.

After World War II, the use of a new pesticide DDT, to control mosquitoes and other insects, entered waterways where fish absorbed it. Eagles were poisoned when they ate the fish. DDT interfered with the ability of the eagles to produce strong eggshells, which caused the eggs to break and fail to hatch. In the 1970s, only 100 pairs of eagles nested in Wisconsin.

DDT was banned in 1972, the first step on the eagles' road to recovery. By 1995, the status of the bald eagle was changed from endangered to threatened in all lower forty-eight states. In 2007, it was removed from the Endangered Species list, as the number of nesting pairs had increased dramatically. They remain protected, however, under other federal laws. Current threats to eagles include: collisions with cars, electrocution, poisoning, illegal shooting, disease, starvation, and lead poisoning.

About 25% of eagles admitted to the University of Minnesota Raptor Center for Rehabilitation in the forty years had lead in their systems. Eagles ingest lead when they eat fish or other prey containing lead, such as lead sinkers and fishing tackle or waterfowl and other animals. Even a small amount of lead can damage the nervous system and organs, leading to motor control problems, organ failure, and death. One way we can protect eagles from lead poisoning is to consider switching to lead-free ammunition and fishing tackle.

Thanks to efforts to protect eagles and their habitats, we are fortunate to observe them in our area. We can help them by viewing them from a distance, especially when they are on a nest. Use your car as a blind, instead of getting out of a car. Don't disturb them or cause them to fly off, as that wastes valuable energy. Mornings are a good time to watch for eagles as they hunt for a meal. In late afternoon, they return to their night roosts in large trees. By following these guidelines, we can enjoy this wonderful resource and ensure it will be here for future generations to observe.

Sources: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, National Wildlife Federation, and the National Eagle Center.

BALD EAGLE

Facts

- May live 25 years in the wild, up to 50 years in captivity
- Mate for life, but if one dies or fails to return to the nest the next breeding season, the survivor will accept a new mate
- Nests can be 4-5 feet in diameter, and 2-4 feet deep, weighing up to 4,000 pounds. They can be found near the top of tallest living tree, at the fork of the branches, near the trunk.
- The expression “eagle eye” refers to the eye structure of the eagle which allows it to see something the size of a rabbit three miles away.
- An eagle has a 6-7 ½ foot wingspan. They can fly 30mph and dive after prey at 100mph.
- Wings can be used as oars to bring a large fish to shore.
- They will winter as far north as there is open water and adequate food.
- Their diet is primarily fish, but they will eat other animals: birds, waterfowl, small mammals (squirrels, raccoons, rabbits and other rodents)

Lake Wissota



Saturday, June 25

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Lions Pavilion

at the Lafayette Town Hall

The Lake Wissota Improvement and Protection Association invites all residents to our annual picnic.

Come get acquainted with your lake neighbors; learn about the activities of the lake association.

Free Food while supplies last.

If you are lucky, win a Door Prize!



Legislative Updates

MARY JO FLEMING

A number of bills passed the Assembly and Senate in this legislative session that reduce protection of surface waters and limit standards that county shoreland zoning can enact in order to protect or improve our rivers and lakes. These have been touted as property rights bills, but they reduce water quality for all.

AB 600/SB459 rolled back lake and wetland protections along with new limitations on local governments' ability to control pollution. Assembly Bill 600 curtails governmental authority to regulate lakefront owners and developers who want to build on wetlands, and reduces the amount of lake area that is classified as sensitive (critical habitat areas that support fisheries and other aquatic species and are important for aiding water quality). The bill makes it easier for business developers to fill wetlands that help hold and filter water coming off the land and entering surface water. Part of the bill that would have allowed property owners to dredge near their shoreland without a permit was removed after a protest by lake associations, lake districts, and sportsmen's groups.

AB603/SB477 changed shoreland zoning standards. These changes were slipped into the Budget Bill. The bill states that counties cannot enact more stringent land use and water quality zoning regulations than the state standards, which were originally enacted as statewide minimums. One third of the counties had stricter zoning regulations that have now been rescinded under this law.

AB 582/SB 464 stops local governments from declaring moratoriums on certain types of development and limits a local government's ability to set certain conditions on the repair or replacement of buildings legally constructed in shore land set-back areas by virtue of a variance. Judges can also no longer give deference to the expertise of state regulators when an agency such as the DNR is challenged in court.

In efforts to protect our lakes, the Wisconsin Lakes Association (www.wisconsinlakes.org) has opposed these bills. Do you know how your legislators voted and which ones advocate for the protection of Wisconsin lakes?



Celebrate the Lower Chippewa River!

ANN GORDON

Friday September 9

8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. | Heyde Center, Chippewa Falls

Saturday September 10

8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Phoenix Park, Eau Claire

Planning is underway for the third annual Celebrate the Lower Chippewa River Conference, and everyone is invited to attend! Friday's Conference is a great opportunity to learn about local river and lake biology, research projects currently underway, and plans for the future of the Lower Chippewa River. Saturday is a day to recreate on the river in ways you may never have before. Last year, just under 100 people attended Friday's Conference and on Saturday about 45 kayakers and bicyclists recreated on the river.

The Conference will begin on Friday at the Heyde Center in Chippewa Falls. Registration begins at 8:30 am followed by keynote speakers, morning and afternoon breakout sessions, lunch, and happy hour. The Friday Conference concludes at 4:30 pm.

On Saturday the Conference moves to Phoenix Park in Eau Claire for various river and shore activities including a guided paddle trip, a guided bike ride, river photography, a close look at mussels and invertebrates, and the WDNR will be shocking fish and bringing them to shore for observation. There will also be plenty of activities for the kids including bank fishing, a plant walk, and geocaching.

Beaver Creek Reserve Citizen Science Center staff and advisory members from various organizations including LWIPA are planning the Conference. As more detailed information becomes available, it can be found at www.beavercreekreserve.org or contact Emily at Emily@beavercreekreserve.org (715) 877-2212



Canoes for a Cause May 14

MATT LEINENKUGEL

Make new friends and help the environment by planting trees and shrubs in the Little Lake Wissota Watershed. You don't need a canoe!

Meeting place: The View

Registration: 7:30 a.m.

Event Kick off: 8:00 a.m. (loading for buses at 8:15 a.m.)

Lunch: 12:00 p.m.

The 2016 Leinenkugel's Chippewa Falls Canoes for a Cause event will be held on Saturday, May 14th. Volunteers can register at the event or online at www.canoesforacause.com

Volunteers will meet at The View (on Little Lake Wissota) between 7:30am-8:00am on Saturday morning. From there, bus transportation will be provided to and from the event site(s). This year's project will involve installing a buffer zone within the Little Lake Wissota watershed by planting trees and shrubs. Around noon, buses will leave the sites and head back to The View for lunch and beverages. Any and all volunteers are welcomed and appreciated!

T-shirts will be provided to all registered volunteers. Volunteers should be aware they may encounter muddy conditions, and wear appropriate clothing and shoes.



Wisconsin Boating Safety Classes

JOHN SWENSON

If you were asked what the minimum age to obtain a driver's license in Wisconsin is, you could probably answer that question without much hesitation. If you were asked the same question about the minimum age allowable to operate a motorboat in Wisconsin, it might take a little longer to answer.

As a volunteer boating safety instructor for the Wisconsin DNR, I have found that many parents and young adults are unaware that Wisconsin law has specific age requirements with respect to the operation of motorboats, and in an effort to spread the word, below is a summary of those requirements.

Wisconsin boating safety certification or out of state equivalent certification is required for operators of motorboats born on or after January 1, 1989 and at least 16 years of age. Operators 12 to 15 years of age must either have a certificate or have an adult onboard while operating. Anyone 10 years of age or older is eligible to take the class and receive a certificate, but the certificate does not become valid until the child reaches 12 years of age. And children under the age of 10 may not operate a motorboat, even with adult supervision.

The safety certification requires completing and passing a DNR-approved boating safety class. Once obtained, it is good for life. While five states have no safety class requirements, the Wisconsin certification is recognized by the other forty-five states in the U.S. which have similar requirements.

There are four three-day classes currently scheduled at the Lafayette Town Hall.

March 21-23 | 9 a.m. - Noon

May 24 - 26 | 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

June 22 - 24 | 9 a.m. - Noon

July 20 - 22 | 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

For more information, or to register for any of these classes, contact the Eau Claire DNR Service Center at 715-839-3700 or John Swenson at 715-828-2514.

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County Highway X Bridge Construction Update

KERRY INGRAHAM

A public information meeting to discuss the Lake Wissota County Highway (CTH) X Bridge construction project was held February 15, 2016 at the Lafayette Town Hall. Approximately 60 people attended the meeting. The construction schedule and road detour were the main focus of the meeting.

The bridge is scheduled to be closed to road traffic May 1st through October 15th, 2016. State Highway (STH) 29 will be the official detour route. Initially, the Chippewa County Highway Department tried to keep one lane of the bridge open during construction to help ease the access for local residents and businesses on Hwy X, but this proved to be too expensive. Construction bids came in at a much greater cost than the budget allowed, delaying the construction phase from 2015 to 2016.

The construction is scheduled for weekdays, Monday through Friday with possible weekends if needed. No construction will be done on holiday weekends (i.e., Memorial Day Weekend, 4th of July weekend, and Labor Day Weekend). Boat traffic under the bridge will be affected minimally. It should be noted that one other construction schedule restriction is the WDNR mandate that no in-stream disturbance is to take place between April 15 – June 1.

BRIDGE COMPARISON

	EXISTING BRIDGE	FUTURE BRIDGE
BRIDGE WIDTH	12' LANE / 3' SHOULDER	12' LANE / 14' SHOULDERS
BRIDGE LENGTH	189'	230'
ROADWAY WIDTH	12' LANE / 4' SHOULDER	12' LANE / 10' SHOULDER
BIKE/PEDESTRIAN	NONE	12' WIDE TRAIL

For more information on the project or to view the Public Information Meeting presentation, please see the Chippewa County website at www.co.chippewa.wi.us

Any questions on this project should be directed to Fred Anderson at (715) 738-2610 or fangerson@co.chippewa.wi.us.

When In Doubt, It's Best to Keep Out

BARB MACNAUGHTON-BERNHARDT

That is the advice given by the Centers for Disease Control and Wisconsin Division of Public Health about blue-green algae blooms.

Most of us have experienced blue-green algae blooms: days when the lake is covered with a colored mat or scum, blue-green, reddish or brown in color, as if painted. Blue-green algae is actually cyanobacteria, microscopic organisms found naturally in all types of water. However, they tend to increase in large watersheds, shallow lakes, and impoundments. Blue-green algae blooms can happen anytime during the year, but usually occur during summer and fall. The blooms grow quickly when the water is warm, stagnant, and full of nutrients, especially phosphorus and nitrogen. Sources of phosphorus and nitrogen include manure, fertilizer, soil erosion, storm water runoff from roofs, roads, and sidewalks, sewer and septic systems, the use of fossil fuels, and yard and pet waste.

Besides being unpleasant aesthetically, sometimes blue-green algae can produce toxins which can cause illness when exposed. Exposure can be swallowing water (ingesting), contact with skin, or inhalation. Not all blue-green algae produce toxins, and those that do, don't always do. In other words, it is difficult to tell if toxins are present. Toxins can be present without odor. The toxins can harm the liver or nervous system in humans, pets, and livestock, and can cause gastrointestinal symptoms, rashes, or respiratory symptoms.

Common human symptoms include:

- Sore throat
- Congestion
- Cough
- Wheezing
- Eye irritation
- Rash
- Blistering
- Abdominal pain
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Common animal symptoms include:

- Lethargy
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Convulsions
- Difficulty breathing
- General weakness

Some advice to protect yourself and your animals from harmful algae blooms:

- Don't swim, waterski or boat in areas where water is discolored or where you see foam, scum or mats of algae on the water
- Don't let pets or livestock swim in or drink from areas where the water is discolored or where you see foam, scum or mats of algae on the water
- Don't let pets lick the algae off their fur
- Do rinse yourself and your pet off immediately if there is contact with algae-affected waters
- Do get medical treatment right away if you think you, your pet, or your livestock may have been poisoned by algal toxins



This photo, taken facing northeast, shows the future lake bed in the background and Wissota Dam construction in progress on March 3, 1916. Photo compliments of Xcel Energy.

Continued from Spring / Summer 2015 Lakeside News.

Local Boosters Dreamed a Thing of Beauty and Joy Forever.

... The erection of the Lake Wissota Bridge was not featured in the local newspapers. Instead they carried stories about clearing the brush from the future lake site, construction of the new dam, purchase and removal of the existing “Yellow River Bridge,” and avoiding disruption of highway traffic during the whole project. The dam was seen as much as an economic boon to the area as a great engineering feat. Stories carried by the newspapers tended to focus on technological aspects of the dam; though a few progress reports, including discussions of weather delays and labor problems, also appeared. There was also one report of a rumor that foreign sympathizers would attempt to blow up the dam.

The greatest concern, as identified by the newspapers, was whether the future lake site would be cleared of brush and trees before it was inundated. Local boosters dreamed of a lake that would not just be a “financial asset to the company which has erected the dam,” but also be a “thing of beauty and joy forever.” Who would pay for the clearing of the brush and trees was a matter of great debate. Wisconsin Minnesota Light and Power Company (WMLPC) did not want to incur this expense, and suggested holding the water level of the new lake at 10 feet below the crest until it froze, at which time brush and trees could easily be cut off at a point well below the future surface. Promoters of the beautiful lake concept feared this would leave brush and snags to contaminate the lake causing it to turn green in the summer. Fisheries might also suffer as a result of the debris. Ultimately, some cutting and clearing was done through the initiative of volunteers and the local government. Exactly how much was cleared, and what role, if any, WMLPC played, is not known.



COBBAN BRIDGE

The old “Yellow River Bridge,” built in 1908 and removed to make way for the lake, was a two-span Pennsylvania truss. This “light wagon bridge” had pin-connections and roller nest expansion bearings. It had a 15-7’ roadway, and a seven-ton capacity. Purchased by the towns of Eagle Point and Arthur in 1916, it was moved to a new location a few miles to the north, where it became known as the Cobban Bridge.

(This information was taken from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Historic American Engineering Record, for construction of the Silver Bridge spanning Lake Wissota on Hwy S.)

During the next few years each issue of our newsletter will feature an article on the 1913-1917 formation of Lake Wissota. Xcel Energy has provided the Lake Wissota Improvement & Protection Assn. and Chippewa County Historical Society with written materials and approximately 1,000 images of dam construction in Chippewa Falls. We greatly appreciate their support of sharing this information with residents and members of our non-profit organizations.

LWIPA



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

SPRING & SUMMER 2016

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. Our organization 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

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.