

Muskellunge Lake Association, Inc.

Newsletter

March 2018
Annual Summary



Volume

100

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE - Mike Newmeister, michael.newmeister@gmail.com 414-326-6130

YOUR LAKE IS CALLING

2018 promises to be a pivotal year for Muskellunge Lake. As you all are aware, in 2016 we joined a dubious collection of lakes experiencing the invasion of Eurasian Water Mil-foil (EWM). Best efforts to locate and reduce the infestation were undertaken in 2017. This is the year we'll find out the extent of our problem, and whether the passive interventions (no chemicals) of 2017 can control the invasion.

As we are not a lake district, our funds are limited in outsourcing remedial actions. Consequently, we will need a collective effort of many lake residents to assist in planning and implementing interventions. It is time to join your neighbors who have carried the brunt of this work to date. Add your name to the volunteer list who we can call upon to help out by contacting the webmaster at musky.board@gmail.com

Unlike many lake associations, we have historically had a large number of property owners who are members. Your annual dues of only \$40 is a small price to pay to sustain the association as the board strives to use those scarce resources for the lake's health. As noted below, we may very well face circumstances that will stress our resources. Help us by continuing your membership and imploring your neighbors to do the same.

A great way to get involved is to accept a role within our lake association. We anticipate as least 2 vacancies on our board of directors in the next year. We are currently without a chair for our Sunshine Committee and our Social Committee.

As you are aware, we have reduced the number of these newsletters over the past several years. As you read this newsletter you'll see it is not easy pulling all this relevant information together for you. As it so happens however, we too are increasingly relying upon electronic communication to get out the message of significant developments affecting the lake. Our webmaster will routinely blast out notices to those for whom we have an email address. The website, www.Muskellungelake.org will list current upcoming events. Many lake activities are weather dependent (aerator installation and removal), or subject to others availability (EWM removal by Aquatic Plant Management last August). There is no way that a newsletter can marshal the volunteers that we need to assist in projects. This will be even more pertinent if we embark on a process to hand remove EWM as a volunteer effort. If you use email and are not receiving information from the webmaster, pass on your email address to musky.board@gmail.com.



On another note, many of you are aware our eutrophic lake has an overabundance of phosphorous. (See Jeff Rappold's excellent summary below) We may be dangerously close to a tipping point of no recovery if the present trends continue. We suspect that we have some point sources within the watershed contributing to the problem. We also do not know how effective our aeration system is in keeping oxygen levels high enough in winter to lock the phosphorous in place at the bottom of the lake.

With this in mind, the board will consider applying for a Lake Management Grant this fall. That grant will focus on these types of issues that have long term impact for the health of the lake. As with our Rapid Response Grant, we will have to rely upon a large volunteer effort to fulfill our financial obligation. If you think such a study is for the good of the lake, we will need you to step up and help. I for one know that we keep going to the same well for volunteers to the point where that well may dry up. We look forward to your thoughts about such a grant at our Annual Meeting on July 28.

EARLY DETECTION AND RESPONSE GRANT

In March of 2017, the Muskellunge Lake Association was the recipient of a grant to respond to the discovery of Eurasian Water Mil-foil in our lake. The grant totaled \$14,997. Of which our lake association is responsible for 25% of that amount or \$4999.25. The grant however allows us to defray out of pocket cost by volunteering hours of service for grant related activities, and an offset for in kind equipment use. Upon approval of the grant, the board hired Emmons & Olivier, Inc of Minneapolis as our consultant. Our contact is Joe Pallardy who has had extensive contact with our lake as his parents were property owners until very recently.

The DNR concluded their 'point intercept' in July. And many of your lake neighbors assisted in identifying and mapping areas of mil-foil infestation. Several areas of infestation were identified, all in shallow waters. The board then contracted with Aquatic Plant Management of Minocqua for hand pulling of the invasive plant. Most of the nearly 50 hours of their labor focused on the center bar where the Eurasian Mil-foil had matted at the surface. Additional removal focused on the north shore near the landing and the south shore near the aerator. 30 + cubic feet of mil-foil was removed from the lake over two days of hand harvesting.

Our grant allows for us to request matching funds through 2020. In 2017, your association had out of pocket expenses of \$8490.75 payable to our consultant, Emmons & Olivier, Inc, and Aquatic Plant Management. We had 114 hours of volunteer labor to offset most of our 25% match. We also had in kind contribution through the use of boats by many members of the association totaling \$243. In 2018, we anticipate the need for extensive volunteer hours to locate and map areas of infestation throughout our lake. This surely will be the year we get a clear picture of the future of this infestation. Obviously, a depletion in the volume of mil-foil will be the best outcome of the 2017 efforts. Due to the fact that we have expended over one-half of the grant in the first year, the board is exploring training and equipping volunteers to undertake most future hand harvesting. This will be a very large undertaking and additional volunteers who like the water will be necessary to make such an effort successful.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Here's a list of your neighbors who volunteer their time and talents to improve your lake over the past year. When you see them around the lake, take time to acknowledge their efforts on your behalf. I apologize if I missed a few. Thank you: Mark Adams, Cheryl Breitenfeldt, Wayne Breitenfeldt, Tom Cerull, Ruth Cerull, Bonnie Duffee, Larry Duffee, Mark Fouts, Debbie Fouts, Bob Hodkiewicz, Susan Hodkiewicz, Joe Huber, Mark Huber, Mimi Johnston, Roger Johnston, Donna Kania, Jerry Kania, John



Kurhajec, Maureen Kurhajec, Tony Mattson, Gayla Newmeister, Mike Newmeister, Joe Pallardy, Mike Passarelli, Bob Peterson, Judy Peterson, Bill Raboin, Lillis Raboin, Jean Rappold, Jeff Rappold, Jeff Splitt

WELCOME COMMITTEE – Lillis Raboin, wlraboin@aol.com 920-374-9784

If you are listing your lake home, you notice a for sale sign on a neighboring property, or you notice new folks moving in on the lake, please let me know. I can follow up and when a sale takes place I can send a "welcome to the lake" packet. You MLA members are my best sources!! We want all owners to know about our hard-working lake association and our wonderful web site.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – Bonnie Duffee, larrnbonn@gmail.com 715-477-0792

Well, after a long, very cold winter, I'm sure we are all looking forward to an early spring. These are the cards I have sent out so far.

A get well card on November 7, 2017 to Mimi Johnston after her heart surgery.

A 50th Anniversary card sent to Mimi and Roger Johnston.

A sympathy card was sent on December 5, 2017 to Michael Wallner for the passing of his father.

A get well card was sent to Mimi Johnston after her knee surgery this winter.

Please remember to email me or give me a call if there is a need to send a card to anyone.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

No chair at present

WEBMASTER – Jeff Rappold, musky.board@gmail.com 920-585-9133

WEB. Well another year and the usage on our web site www.muskellungelake.org is still going well. We get 20 - 30 visits a month on average and even more when events like the annual meeting is upcoming. We had a nice comment from a family that purchased a property on our lake. They sent a note that said the information and detail on our web site helped convince them to purchase here. They could see that the residents on the lake really cared about being here. Who knew this web thing could help your property values? I must say that maintaining the web site in real time can be a bit difficult. It will always be the primary repository of all things about our lake and the official record keeping library. Of course, any photos we get are put in the photo libraries as they are the most popular areas viewed. While our web site looks cool and has a ton of info and links, it was built at a time of a largely a PC world. Now with tablets, phones, various operating systems and even smart TV's it is fair to say the formatting may be a little weird where you are coming from. Well I'm told all the info is still there, it just may look different. Web development to keep up with this is quite expensive so as long as we aren't missing things, I guess we'll put up with some weird formatting on occasion.

E-Mail. Well the younger folks would say that email is a bit old school. But, it is still the communication tool that is most flexible and used by business. You can save it, move it, forward it, attach things to it, copy and paste it, link it, send to multiple people and the list goes on. You can read it at home, work or on your phone. Some of the many and newest communications tools may look cool, but some won't be around in a few years. Excuse me if we chose to be a bit old school, the Snap-Tweet-Insta, Book... social world just isn't going to be something we try to keep up with as communication tools.

News. This brings up a key point about our newsletters or even the lack of them on occasion. We are finding that the news you want to know about isn't timely any longer if we wait for the next mailing. New things are going on around and about the lake that you want to know about. The efforts with Eurasian Milfoil management, Boat Landing monitoring, soliciting volunteers or making announcements of events or work days can all be done more efficiently via email. Just as important, the reply function helps us understand any concerns you may have or want to share. Please share your email address with us and keep it up to date if you make changes. If you don't have an email address,



ask a family member to be your lake news ears and let you know what is going on. We are not trying to cut back on news, we are just trying to be more effective and timely.

Facebook. A bit like the above, Facebook looked like a great way to share photos, news, and fun stuff. But how Facebook works for individuals vs. organizations is quite different. We have only a handful of people who liked us and even fewer that actively ever used it. So here is an opportunity for someone who is a real Facebook whiz. Let me know and I'll turn over the keys to our pages. In the mean time we'll keep it alive just a bit inactive.

Personal Information. We will never purposely share your email addresses or contact info with anyone outside of the MLA board. We will try blind copy your email so the addresses are hidden. Your contact info and that of your lakeside neighbors is on the web site and in the password protected area. If you have forgotten your password for access to this area let me know. Please let me know of changes to any of your contact info so we can keep our database current. Mailing addresses, cell phone numbers, email contacts and even names change on occasion. Keep us up to date and current if you would. Contact me Jeff Rappold at musky.board@gmail.com.

BOAT LANDING – John Kurhajec john.kurhajec.b1h7@statefarm.com 715-479-1703

2018 Clean Boats Clean Waters. The board agreed to request a Clean Boats Clean Waters grant from the DNR for the 2018 boating season. Our request for \$3,434 was granted. These funds will be used to hire UW Oshkosh students to monitor our boat landing for 200 hours. As a grant recipient, we are required to cover 25% or \$858.50 of the cost. Over the past few years, we have fulfilled this obligation in cash. We do have the option of defraying all or part of this by volunteering do CBCW inspections at our boat landing. If anyone is interested, contact the association at musky.board@gmail.com and we'll coordinate your assistance with the Oshkosh students.

WATER QUALITY – Jeff Rappold, musky.board@gmail.com 920-585-9133

The Science. In case you didn't know, volunteers on our lake have been reporting water quality data to the WDNR since 1973. This data is reported as a part of the Citizens Lake Monitoring Network. (CLMN). Five to six times a year we check water clarity, temperature profile, We also provide prepared samples for lab tests of Phosphorous (the nutrient) and Chlorophyll (algae). This data recorded over time helps keep track of overall water quality. You can look up the data for our lake by searching the DNR site for Muskellunge Lake or going to this link <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/waterquality/Station.aspx?id=643137> .

What we know. Well we have known for a long time that our lake is Eutrophic. The trophic index has been staying around 60 which means lower clarity, plant overgrowth and seasonal algae growth. It is important to keep an eye on these factors as changes of the nutrients or algae content can have a big effect on the aging process on our lake. If indexes go into the high 60's, we will see things like blue-green algae blooms and conditions only suitable for warm water fish species. Reversing this aging process is difficult but we can certainly help by not adding to the problems. Never use lawn and garden fertilizers on lakeside properties. Keep your septic system checked and in good order. Minimize stirring up bottom sediments with your boat prop wash. Keep your shoreline natural with plenty of natural plants to filter run off. Your efforts will help.

The lake is changing. It seems like our lake changes a lot sometimes. Why is that? A couple years ago the lake was exceptionally clear well into the early summer. Many hoped it would always be like that. Well if you recall that year had a very late ice out and a cool and cloudy spring. The usual remix of nutrients that occurs at spring turnover was delayed as was the algae. By late summer if you recall we had a weed crop like we had not seen in years. Lots of sun and clear water will do that. Opposite to that effect, this last summer many noticed that the water was quite turbid and brown most of the summer. The usual weed growth was way down from normal and did not reach out as far into the bays. Many



thought the weeds had finally retreated and hoped it would always be like that. Well if you also remember we had an unusual amount of rain in the early summer. This caused huge dirty runoffs, high water and a new influx of nutrients. Winds kept the water turbid most of the summer. With reduced light, it prevented the weeds from growing out in the deeper waters like normal. You see there is a cause and affect too much of the perceived water quality in our lake. Much is controlled by Mother Nature, but you can control your part too. Any snapshot in time can be misleading. Therefore, we rely on the science.

Going forward. Tracking the chemistry of the lake over time will give us some early indications of trouble. This next year we will begin also tracking, on a regular basis, the dissolved oxygen content at various depths. We have discovered that late in the summer the depths below 10-12 feet are often oxygen depleted. We will try over time to see if there are any connections between the anaerobic conditions on the bottom and the phosphorous nutrients in the lake. We're not sure where this will lead us but without data we will get nowhere. This is an interesting science. If you want to understand more of the science and want to help with the collection process, let me know. We can always use volunteers.

AERATOR – Bob Hodkiewicz hud4@frontier.com 715-479-7194

The aerator fencing was put in on Sunday Jan. 7th, due to the cold weather on Saturday the 6th. There were nine volunteers that helped this year making this task a bit easier. Our helpers included; Joe Huber, Mark and Debbie Fouts, Jeff Rappold, Jeff Splitt, Larry Duffy, Mike Passarelli, Wayne Breitenfeldt, and Bob Hodkiewicz. After the job was done, all the volunteers met at Huddy's house for chili, drinks, and some sweats. Thanks to all for promoting a healthy Muskellunge Lake. We will send an email requesting some help to pull in the fencing near ice out this spring. It maybe short notice as Mother Nature doesn't always let us plan ahead. Stay tuned.

Editor's Note: Once again, kudos to Huddy for his unwavering efforts to babysit the aerator and keep it working for all of us. The system is 20+ years old and is in need of constant vigilance.

EWM MANAGEMENT – Jeff Rappold, musky.board@gmail.com 920-585-9133

What we know. You have read earlier of our specific efforts to control and harvest the invasive plant Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM). While our efforts of prevention at the landing helped delay the invasion, we are now faced with dealing with it. Why should you care? Unchecked in some lakes, EWM can grow into huge matted masses that makes recreational use of the water near impossible. The EWM grows early and fast and can crowd out and shade the native plants until they die off. The diversity of the biomass (weeds) declines and the lake ages very quickly. To be clear, we don't know if that will happen here but waiting until some future tipping point may prove to be too late. In our lake, the large amount and diversity of plants is a good thing. It is more difficult for EWM to find a place to get started with lots of native plants. EWM can spread easily. This plant can auto fragment and break apart all on its own. These fragments then move around and take root in new areas. Boaters and fishermen can also break off and spread the fragments of this plant. It is no coincidence that the EWM found in our lake so far is in areas popular with fishing and boating. We know we will never totally eliminate EWM in our lake. We will need to closely monitor it and plan to deal with it for a long time.

Identification. EWM is sometimes difficult to identify. In our lake, most often it has been found in areas that are 3-5 feet deep and on relatively hard bottom with silt some on top. It tends to grow in clumps and grows to the surface and then canopies on the surface. This last summer it was found near the eagle's nest, near the buoy in the center of the lake and on the south shore east of the inlet culvert. Late season patrols found some remaining in the previously harvested areas and we also found several new areas that will need to be a part of the plan in 2018. We will never totally eradicate EWM in our lake. Chemical treatment here will also destroy our good plants. So we are left with searching it out and selectively manually removing it from the lake.



What can you do. You need to be a bit careful if you are going to manually remove EWM yourself. The root ball needs to be removed or it just grows back. Just cutting it without removing the stems from the water just sends all kinds of fragments around so now your neighbors will have to deal with it as well. Chopping it up with your boat prop will just spread a plume of fragments to take root elsewhere. Fishermen can help as well. If you think you have some EWM that has been retrieved on your lure, throw the weeds in a small bucket that you can keep in your boat and deposit them on shore later. The habit of just shaking it off or throwing it back in the lake just sends a piece off to take root somewhere else. Boaters can help as well. Running your boat too much in shallow waters destroys good plants. While it may create a nice sandy and open area, it also is now a great bare spot for new EWM to take root. As most gardeners know, stir up the dirt if you want a real crop of weeds to grow.

Our plan. So, your best course of action is to: Learn to identify EWM, Locate and mark it, Let someone on the MLA board now so we can make it at part of our plans. We are maintaining a detailed GPS record of locations and size so if you can share coordinates of a new finding that helps. We can all still enjoy the lake as we always have if we are mindful of a few of these EWM precautions. If you would like to help even more, volunteer to be trained in identification and location marking. Your boating cruises or fishing outings on the lake can be a benefit to us all.

SPECIAL EVENTS

4th of July Boat Parade. It is time again to celebrate the birth of our nation by engaging in some old-fashioned fun, our annual Muskellunge Lake boat parade. Come out and join in the fun! Watch your email for announcements of the details and time for this year's parade. Last year's winner was the swashbuckling Kurhajec family with their pirate ship. Congratulations and watch for the winner's flag lakeside. We are also looking for some helpers to organize this bit of summer fun. We thank Ruth Cerull as she inspired this 6 years ago. They are moving from their lake home so now we need a few new helpers to keep the beach ball rolling.

Annual Meeting. Watch for announcements regarding the annual meeting to be held on Saturday morning July 28th, 2018. We hope to have another good program of interest for you as well as a short business meeting. This is a good opportunity to see and understand the things that affect you and your lakeside investment. You can meet and thank the people that keep this lake association going. After all you do receive benefits from those efforts. It is also a good place to see where a little bit of your time can benefit us all. Board elections are set for July at the annual meeting. While we enjoy seeing the same faces at board meetings, we wouldn't mind seeing a new face or two. If you have an interest in serving your lake in any capacity, please see a board member or let the webmaster know.

CALENDAR

Board of Directors Meeting	June 16, 9:00 AM Eagle River Airport
EWM Lake work weekend	June 15 – June 17
Annual Meeting	July 28, 2018 9:00 AM Kalmar Center

