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TO BE MORE INFORMED



JULY 2021

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RALALA LAKES ASSOCIATION

MESSAGE FROM BOB EDDY, RALALA ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

We have a number of events planned over the next few months and we hope that you can find the time to join us. These events are detailed in our newsletters. They also appear on the RALALA Calendar of Events found on our website. Go to the Events tab on ralalalakes.org for a month by month listing of these activities.

The RALALA website is also a great source of information about the water quality of our lakes, the maintenance of our shorelands and how critical it is to protect the health of our lakes. There is also a section on invasives and how we control them. I want to emphasize the amount of good information there is available in this one handy location.

I have a few other items I want to bring to your attention:

We have our annual meeting scheduled for **August 7 at 9 a.m.** at the Crooked Lake Town Hall in Outing. We encourage as many of our RALALA members to attend as possible. We will be sending out an agenda for the meeting in late July.



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On the Road to Becoming a Lake Steward **PARADE OF SHORES** Saturday, July 24, 9 a.m. to Noon

Join the parade! Here is a **FREE** opportunity to learn more about Protecting Our Lakes. RALALA is hosting visits to lakeshore properties allowing you to see and hear about land management choices owners have made and projects they have undertaken to contribute to lake health and clean water. Rainwater is filtered, runoff is reduced, slopes and shorelines are stabilized preventing erosion and sediment entering the lake, and we all benefit.

Stops on the parade route will include:

- Buffer zones adjacent to the shoreline
- Rain gardens and runoff containment structures
- Mitigation of shoreline disruption and erosion caused by significant ice heaves
- Steep slope stabilization utilizing native wildflowers

Start by registering at the Crooked Lake Township Hall between 9 and 11 a.m. and enjoy a cup of coffee and a treat. You will receive a folder of information about the location and features of the stops on the parade route. You will then plan your self directed route, visiting the properties between 9 and noon, aided by maps and signs to guide you. Property owners and RALALA members will be at each of the sites to assist you and answer questions. Add to the fun by grabbing lunch afterwards at one of our great restaurants, check out their ads in this newsletter.

Enjoy, Explore and Learn!

BUILDING AWARENESS ○ ENCOURAGING ACTION

A DEEPER DIVE Into Beautiful Lake Views

Reflect a bit on your concept of beauty. Think of fashion's evolution over the years from voluminous dresses with corsets and bustles to pantsuits and mini skirts or gentlemen's pantaloons and silk stockings to polyester leisure suits to jeans worn with sport coats and no socks.

Our opinions of what is beautiful evolve and change.

The same is true of our property around our lakes. The wild, back to nature, rugged shorelines attracted settlement and the appeal of "getting away from it all" a hundred years ago. As many of these original, small, rustic cabins became converted to year round lake homes, groomed, mown lawns became the norm. Natural,

native trees, shrubs and ground covers were replaced with fertilized turf grass because that was seen as attractive.

It is not intentional but this change can have a devastating effect on our lakes. Minnesota's shorelines are being developed at a record pace. Buildings and lawns that replace natural shores have adverse impacts on wildlife and water quality. A natural shoreline is more than an aesthetic buffer for the lake; it is a complex ecosystem that

Continued on p.3



ENJOY, EXPLORE & KEEP SCORE AT THE SHORE

Grab a pencil and paper, phone or camera, and a grown-up to go with you. Head to the shoreline, the wilder, more natural the better. Begin looking and listening for all the amazing critters you can see and make a list or take a photo of them. Give yourself 1 point for each category of animal and 1 point for each unique critter. Each time you return see how many interesting things you see.

Category **INSECTS**: You might see dragonflies, also called mosquito hawks because they catch so many of these pests, and fly like helicopters forward, backward, looping and hovering.



Category **CRUSTACEANS**: Look in the lake for the Northern Crayfish that loves cold, clean spring fed lakes and looks like a mini-lobster.

Category **FISH**: Several different kinds may be hiding under a fallen tree.

Category **MOLLUSKS**: They have a soft body enclosed by two hard shell halves called bivalves, we often call them clams.

Category **REPTILES**: You might see a painted turtle taking a sun bath. Fun fact: if it is 84 degrees or hotter on the day turtle eggs are laid, the turtle will be a female, if it is cooler, it will be male.

Category **AMPHIBIANS**: Maybe you'll see a mink frog sitting on a lily pad. They have bright green lips and their croak sounds like a hammer hitting wood.

Category **BIRDS**: Herons may be wading and fishing, loons diving, eagles soaring and songbirds singing.

Category **MAMMALS**: Many prefer to cruise the shores at night, but you might be lucky to see

a mink, a muskrat, a beaver or an otter.

Together with a grown-up, choose your favorites from your list, write them down. Add a couple interesting words to describe them. You have created your very own poem.

For example, you might have seen: dragonflies, swallowtail butterfly, minnows, and a merganser. By adding describing words and a title it became the poem:

Lunch at the Shore

*Dragonflies buzz and dive
through the air*

*A butterfly flutters its wings,
parked on a flower Minnows
dart back and forth
underwater*

*A merganser dives
to catch them*

Send a copy with your name and age to ralala.lakes@gmail.com **SUBJECT: TADPOLE TEAM** or send a photo you took. Look to see some of them in our newsletters.

BUILDING AWARENESS • ENCOURAGING ACTION

A DEEPER DIVE continued

provides habitat for a diversity of wildlife and protects water quality for the entire lake. When a lakeshore becomes developed there is a 30% reduction in native tree and shrub canopy. There is a 60% reduction in shoreline vegetation. Statewide, Minnesota has lost 20-28% of its emergent and floating-leaf vegetation in our lakes.

Run-off from a manicured lake lot lawn can be 5 to 10 times higher than those with natural shorelines. Up to 9 times more phosphorus is carried into the lake than from natural shorelines. Water flowing over lawns also picks up more soil, toxic chemicals, pesticides, pet waste and other pollutants.

A shift is developing back to valuing the beauty of natural upland and shoreline spaces as we better understand their value and look to nature for guidance. Allow trees and shrubs to regenerate along shorelines or re-plant them. Many lake home owners are reluctant to plant trees and shrubs along the lakeshore fearful of losing their view of the lake. On most lakes, shrubs can be planted at the water's edge without obstructing the view from the house because they are downslope. Plant an understory of shade tolerant grasses, sedges and woodland wildflowers. Selectively trim branches only as needed creating a filtered or framed view of the lake giving you privacy and beneficially interrupting the race track for runoff.

You will discover the lake is not the only beautiful view. The amazing diversity of plants and animals in this vibrant space is lovely to look at, too.

LAKE STEWARD PROGRAM

Every improvement we conscientiously make managing shoreline and upland spaces is beneficial to our lakes. No one loves our lakes more than those of us who live and recreate here—become a **Lake Steward** and promote healthy shorelines with vibrant habitats and clean water.

Start by taking the Score Your Shore Quiz now.

mnlakesandrivers.org

Are you a Lake Steward?

Take the Quiz and find out.

Enter **RALALA** as your lake association.



DEAR POLLY

(Protecting Our Lakes Local Yokel)

Dear Polly,

I asked to borrow my neighbor's chainsaw to cut down some trees to improve my view of the lake. He said there are rules and restrictions controlling what I can do and it was better for the lake's water quality if I left a natural, forested bank. What's the deal?

I Like My View, Don't You?

Dear I Like My View, Don't You,

Your neighbor is right on both accounts. There are restrictions limiting the cutting of shoreland trees with potential fines and penalties depending upon where your property is located. Check with the City of Emily or Cass County before beginning. Also, natural vegetation covering upland spaces helps slow harmful polluted runoff and stabilizes the soil preventing erosion which carries sediment into the lake. Runoff and erosion do negatively impact our lakes' water clarity and water quality. However, it is possible to creatively have both, a lovely view and a healthy lake.

Strive for **BALANCE**. Look for ways to **EDIT** by pruning trees and shrubs rather than **ERADICATE** by chopping them down. Consider your sight lines to the lake and define areas to allow denser growth and areas that demand an unobstructed view, such as being able to observe grandkids fishing from the dock, for example. You will be rewarded by an even lovelier view including birds, butterflies and wildlife thriving in your natural landscape.

**For more information:
A DEEPER DIVE INTO
BEAUTIFUL LAKE VIEWS**



RALALA BENNIES

Providing Financial Support for Shoreland Restoration Projects Earn a "Benjamin" for projects that Benefit our lakes!

Start by taking the Lake Steward Quiz at mnlakesandrivers.org. A member of the Support Squad will contact you and provide information how to apply for the **\$100** reimbursement for completed eligible projects such as buffer zones, rain gardens or shoreline stabilization projects.

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PARTNERSHIPS THAT BENEFIT OUR LAKES

RALALA is comprised of all volunteers who work hard to become informed on a wide variety of current issues and to share that knowledge with you. Often our role is assistance in finding information, or guidance how to become involved in an issue, even though many times RALALA takes no official position.

We have built strong connections with others that have common interests—lake associations, research organizations, educational entities, non-profits, advocacy groups, elected officials and governmental agencies.

RALALA is actively engaged with the following groups that help us stay informed of current concerns and leverage our common interest protecting our watershed:

- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) dnr.state.mn.us
- Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) mnlakesandrivers.org
- Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) acclakes.org
- Crow Wing Lakes and Rivers Association (LARA) crowwinglakesandrivers.org
- Pine River Watershed Alliance (PRWA) prwa.us
- Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA) wapoa.org
- Lake Washburn Association lakewashburnmn.org

Their newsletters and/or meeting minutes can be found on our website ralalalakes.org

The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) at the University of Minnesota is a critical resource to help study and develop strategies to combat Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). They receive state funding but need supplemental donations to fulfill that mission. maisrc.umn.edu/

Our website provides many thought provoking articles and sources of important information. Let us know your thoughts and questions with an email to ralala.lakes@gmail.com

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BEAVERS, NATURE, AND HUMAN HABITAT

There are numerous current concerns and questions about beaver activity on our lakes and what can be done to remedy the problem.

Stated most simply, beaver know no bounds in seeking and collecting food and materials, and do not read maps nor parcel boundaries.

If you have, or anticipate, an active **problem beaver** on your property, be aware that:

- 1) Beaver are **protected** under MN Law – which is to say, there are right and wrong ways to work with the situation
- 2) The local DNR Conservation Officer should be your **source** of advice and guidance
- 3) The **simplest advice and cheapest approach** is to **loosely** encircle **vulnerable trees** with stout wire fencing (**chicken wire**)
- 4) RALALA will work with you and the DNR, and may be of assistance with information, but the local landowner(s) need to take the actions approved by the DNR
- 5) If and when the DNR allows removal, the land-owner is responsible for the cost of hiring a professional to remove the beaver

Call:

DNR Information Center: 651-296-6157
888-646-6367, or

Turn in Poachers (TIP) Hotline: 1-800-652-9093

Based upon the situation, they will refer the issue to the assigned Conservation Officer (or CO):

Cass County / Remer Enforcement Area
Calie Kunst, Conservation Officer

Crow Wing County / Cross Lake Enforcement Area
Chelsey Best, Conservation Officer

Find the balance.

**Enjoy the beavers in their natural habitat,
but protect your trees.**

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6
DATE CHANGE TO JULY 4, SUNDAY

Sunday, July 4



**INDEPENDENCE DAY BOAT
PARADE ON EACH RALALA LAKE**
Sunday, July 4, 2021
Assemble at 12:45 pm,
Depart at 1 pm

LEAVITT: East end, widest part of the lake

LAWRENCE: West end, near Luscher Park boat launch

SMOKEY HOLLOW: Middle of the lake

NORTH ROOSEVELT: North of the bridge, near The Channel Bar and Grill

SOUTH ROOSEVELT: Middle of the lake, near the entrance to Woods Bay

Get out the RED, WHITE and BLUE!

Decorate your boats or decorate your docks and wave as the boats cruise by.

If you can help with the festivities, perhaps distributing flyers near your lake home, send an email to: ralala.lakes@gmail.com
Subject: BOAT PARADE, Your Lake's Name

PLEASE SUBMIT ARTICLES OR PHOTOS FOR THE RALALA NEWSLETTER

President: Bob Eddy 612-961-8513
bob.eddy@hotmail.com
Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association
RALALA P.O. Box 139, Outing MN 56662-0139

For membership information contact:
Darril Wegscheid 651-503-8414
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PROTECTING OUR LOONS *By Sheila Langer*



Photo By Sheila Langer

We are fortunate that a number of loons nest here each spring. We all look forward to their first haunting call across the lake in late April or May.

The male leads the female to a suitable nesting spot on land but close to water and nest building begins. The best sites are completely surrounded by water such as an island, muskrat house or lumps of grass-like water plants. Eggs are laid 3-4 days apart and are incubated about 27-30 days. Male and female loons share incubation duties equally. The eggs are large, 3-4 inches long oval shaped and are olive green with brown spots. Loon nesting success and survival of young chicks may decrease with water activity, physical interference with nests along with boat wakes which may swamp and destroy nests and cause loons to abandon some nesting sites.

Loon chicks leave the nest on their first day and grow quickly on a diet of insects, small fish and algae. Loon parents feed their chicks up to seventy times a day. Juvenile chicks catch their own fish within 2 months and take flight at around 3 months. Loon chicks swim right away but spend time on their parent's backs to rest, conserve energy, and avoid predators such as large carnivorous fish, snapping turtles, crows, gulls & eagles.

One of the best ways to encourage loons to visit our lakes is to allow deadfall trees to remain where they naturally toppled into the lake. Deadfall attracts a wide variety of aquatic prey including insects and fish and water birds use these structures for fishing. A loon's diet consists of frogs, crayfish, mussels, leeches, fish and aquatic insects. They swallow small prey under water but larger ones are brought to the surface.

Unfortunately, studies have shown that loon numbers are going down and 25% of loon deaths are caused from lead poisoning after eating fish with lead sinkers or possibly after picking up discarded sinkers from the lake bottoms. The lead is partially dissolved in the loon's gizzard or the second part of the loon's stomach, then absorbed into the blood and body tissues. The absorbed lead causes nerve, kidney and other tissue damage. Human development, recreational use of lakes, acid rain & other pollutants are additional threats to the common loon.

Our loons are a symbol of true wilderness, untouched places and clean water. There is much we can all do to protect this natural resource.

We can start by going through our tackle boxes and replacing our lead sinkers. There are many non-toxic alternatives such as: tungsten, steel, tin, glass and metal composite. The lead sinker that is by far the major contribution to a loon death is called a split-shot sinker. The split-shot sinker is small in size which is easily swallowed by a loon or other water fowl. Fishermen of all ages are familiar with the split-shot sinker. Replacing your split-shot sinker inventory with one of the non-toxic alternatives is more expensive, but the quantity used in a fishing season is small.

The Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores Committee has begun a **"Get the Lead Out"** initiative. They are working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in the development of an informative and educational program. As the **"Get the Lead Out"** initiative takes place we will share the details in an email-blast.



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PROTECTING OUR LAKES SHORELINE INITIATIVE KICKOFF HELD JUNE 12

RALALA hosted a public educational event June 12, 2021 at the Crooked Lake Township Hall launching its **Protecting Our Lakes Shoreline Initiative.**



More than 40 people attended and enjoyed socializing at RALALA's first face to face gathering, to learn **How Our Land Management Practices Impact Our Lakes and Water Quality.**

Sheila Boldt (*right*) and Bethany Chaplin (*left*) from the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District (CWSWCD), spoke and answered many questions from the engaged audience.

They brought their model, frequently used in school presentations, to demonstrate rainfall flow on a typical lakeshore property. They emphasized ways to reduce phosphorus laden runoff and erosion which are harmful to our lakes. Planting shoreline buffer zones of long rooted native plants and utilizing coir logs or willow wattle to stabilize shorelines were examples of topics discussed. Information was shared on the supportive role CWSWCD provides, including site visits, planning, guidance and cost sharing opportunities. Seeds specifically combined for our locale were available to purchase and can also be found at cswgcd.org.



(*Left to Right*) Barb Courneya, Land and Water's Trust board member, Anne Bonnerup RALALA board member and Jan Mossman Land and Water's Trust board member. RALALA's Protecting Our Lakes Shoreline Initiative was the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from Land and Water's Trust Foundation.
 Photos by Sheila Langer

SWIMMER'S ITCH

Last year many cases of Swimmer's itch had been reported on lake areas that have never experienced it before.

Swimmer's itch, also called cercarial dermatitis, appears as a skin rash caused by an allergic reaction to certain microscopic parasites that infect some birds and mammals. These parasites are released from infected snails into fresh and salt water (such as lakes, ponds, and oceans). While the parasite's preferred host is the specific bird or mammal, if the parasite comes into contact with a swimmer, it burrows into the skin causing an allergic reaction and rash. Swimmer's itch is found throughout the world and is more frequent during summer months.

Symptoms of swimmer's itch may include:

- tingling, burning, or itching of the skin
- small reddish pimples
- small blisters

Within minutes to days after swimming in contaminated water, you may experience tingling, burning, or itching of the skin. Small reddish pimples appear within twelve hours. Pimples may develop into small blisters. Scratching the areas may result in secondary bacterial infections. Itching may last up to a week or more, but will gradually go away.

Because swimmer's itch is caused by an allergic reaction to infection, the more often you swim or wade in contaminated water, the more likely you are to develop more serious symptoms. The greater the number of exposures to contaminated water, the more intense and immediate symptoms of swimmer's itch will be.

Most cases of swimmer's itch do not require medical attention. If you have a rash, you may try the following for relief:

- Use corticosteroid cream
- Apply cool compresses to the affected areas
- Bathe in Epsom salts or baking soda
- Soak in colloidal oatmeal baths
- Apply baking soda paste to the rash (made by stirring water into baking soda until it reaches a paste-like consistency)
- Use an anti-itch lotion



Though difficult, try not to scratch. Scratching may cause the rash to become infected. If itching is severe, your health care provider may suggest prescription-strength lotions or creams to lessen your symptoms.

For more information see:

cdc.gov/parasites/swimmersitch/faqs.html

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

*President's message
continued from p.1*

We have formed a sub-committee that has started to meet with Enbridge to better understand their safety processes, emergency response procedures and leak management protocols associated with the Line 3 pipeline. Since the pipeline is here, we want to ensure that there is a world class environmental response to any leak in order to minimize the impact that it will have on the watershed, the community and our beautiful lakes.

Feel free to reach out if you have any questions or comments.

PROTECTING OUR LAKES SHORELINE INITIATIVE KICKOFF *continued from p.1*

RALALA recognized and expressed gratitude for the significant effort and financial support provided for its Protecting Our Lakes (POL) Initiative from:

- Crooked Lake Township Board and its Lakes and Shores Committee
- Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District
- Land and Waters Preservation Trust

Lloyd Thyen (*right*) was recognized as the first in the state to achieve the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR) Lake Steward designation.



Photo by Sheila Langer

(Left to Right) Crooked Lake Township Lakes and Shores Committee Members present at RALALA's Protecting Our Lakes Kickoff, Gary Langer, chairman, Peggy Parks, Milt Spieler, Mary Ann Maki, Rollie Maki and Lloyd Thyen. The Lakes and Shores Committee sought and received approval from the Crooked Lake Township Board of Supervisors to grant \$3500 of their budget to RALALA'S Protecting Our Lakes Shoreline Initiative project establishing the buffer zone of native plants with informational signage at the Outing Dock Landing.