



Fall 2015

# RALALA Lake Association

## Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association Newsletter

### President's Letter—by Bob Lee

I am sure that you have all been wondering where the Fall newsletter is! I have just had a busy fall season and am a little late getting this out. Better late than never!

2015 has been a good solid year for RALALA. We have continued to garner strong financial support from all of you and set a new all-time record for raffle ticket sales, putting us in very good financial condition going into 2016 despite the discontinuance of some of our historical fundraising activities like the silent auction and BBQ. I want to take this opportunity to again thank

all those who worked to sell raffle tickets this year. Your efforts made a real difference.

We have continued to use these funds to do good things for the future of our lakes. Among them was to help the Ruth Lake Improvement District with a \$2000 contribution to treat an infestation of zebra mussels (see separate article); to finance upgrades and improvements to our two I-LIDs located at the launch sites on Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes; to continue our support of the AIS inspection program on our lakes;

and to help with contributions towards the installation of AIS decontamination stations in this area. Similar needs will have to be met in the future.

Not everything RALALA has been doing has revolved around raising and spending money. Thanks to the hard work of Rog Brekken and the funding of the Cass County Sheriff's department, we have started to make some real progress in dealing with our aging fleet of water safety buoys. (See separate article on this) Thanks to Darril Wegscheid and several other members we have con-

*Cont'd on p. 8*

### Update on Ruth Lake Zebra Mussel Infestation—by Bob Lee

We advised you in the summer edition of the newsletter that zebra mussels had been discovered in Ruth Lake in Emily. Subsequent to that discovery numerous surveys and tests were done to determine the extent of the infestation. A total of 24 adult mussels were ultimately discovered, all located in the same small area on the southeast side of the lake in the immediate vicinity of a rental property with an unsuspected boat launch site. Extensive tests for veligers (the larvae of zebra mussels) came up negative.

The lack of veligers means it

is unlikely the zebra mussels are reproducing yet, making the lake a prime candidate for localized eradication efforts. Ruth Lake Improvement District and the DNR both concluded that it would make sense to try to treat the part of the lake where mussels had been found to try to kill all zebra mussels in that area (and hopefully all of the mussels in the lake). They also concluded it was important to act quickly, before the mussels started to reproduce and before the water temperature dropped below 54° at which point the mussels stop filtering

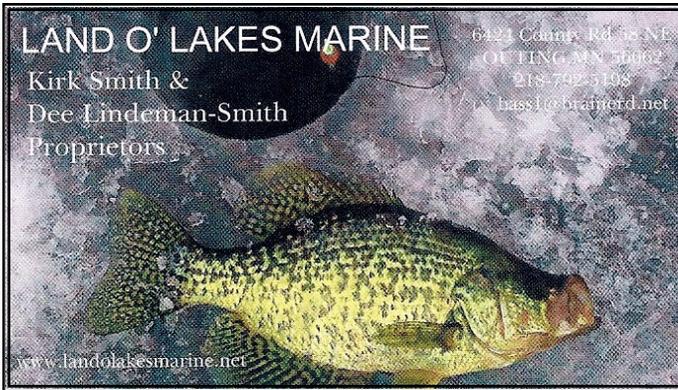
water and become almost impossible to kill with chemicals until the water warms up next spring.

Based on the results of the Christmas Lake treatments last winter, both the DNR and PLM Lake and Land Management Corporation (the Brainerd-based firm that also treated Christmas Lake and Independence Lake in earlier this year) concluded that the most likely treatment to be effective would be EarthTec QZ, a copper-based algae-cide/bactericide that only recently was labeled for AIS treatment purposes. The cop-

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per levels achieved by treatment are high enough to kill the mussels but low enough to have no significant impact on other aquatic life or human use of the lake. PLM estimated that it would cost about \$20,000 to treat 3.4 acres of the lake encompassing all of the sites

proximity of Ruth Lake to our RALALA lakes and thus the likelihood that an infestation in Ruth would soon be spread to our lakes, RALALA's board of directors approved the donation of \$2000 or 10% of the total needed for the treatment, provided that Ruth Lake could raise the

tions from lakeshore owners on Ruth. Treatment began in early October and indications are that the EarthTec QZ did indeed kill the zebra mussels in the treated area (based on caged mussels that were left in the treatment area as test subjects).



*Dan Swanson, aquatic invasive species specialist, holds a rock from Ruth Lake containing two zebra mussels that have been killed with the chemical treatment. The mussels open after they die after ingesting the chemical.*

Whether the treatment was successful in eliminating the infestation in its entirety will not be known for some time. According to Art Paterson, president of the Ruth Lake Improvement District, extensive testing and monitoring will continue for the next three years to determine the degree of success of this experimental treatment. Art and the members of his association are very appreciative of the substantial financial contribution of RALALA and the support that we showed early in the process.

Patrick Selter, vice president of PLM, said although total eradication would be a great outcome, success in this case will be measured by how well lab-tested research proves to apply to an actual aquatic system. "What we don't want happening is, all of a sudden next spring they find a zebra mussel somewhere and they say it failed. It certainly would be great if we could eradicate them from Ruth Lake, but the situation gave us an opportunity to do more research and more work in lakes rather than laboratory settings."

Let's all hope for the best!

where mussels had been found as well as a reasonable buffer area around these sites. Ruth Lake Improvement District immediately started trying to raise the funds necessary to make treatment possible, both from Ruth Lake residents and from other possible sources, including the State, Crow Wing County, the City of Emily and other nearby lake associations. Given the

rest of the money and get this treatment done in time to have a reasonable likelihood of success.

As it turned out, Ruth was indeed able to secure all of the funding necessary through a State grant under a DNR pilot program, a Crow Wing County contribution, a City of Emily contribution and additional help from other nearby lake associations as well as substantial dona-

**2015 Raffle—A Big Success**

The RALALA 2015 raffle was a resounding success thanks to the leadership of Gary Langer and the hard work of a couple of dozen members who worked so hard at selling tickets both at area events and on other weekends at Outing Station and the Emily Holiday Station. A new record was set for total sales of \$8,227.00!



2nd place (\$1,000) was won by Thomas Durand (right) of Blaine, MN, property owner on Lake Roosevelt and a RALALA member. RALALA Treasurer and Board Member John Rowell made the presentation..

plan to do so next year. It is really a lot of fun as you can see from the photos, and you have chances to win door prizes awarded by RALALA and by the Village Inn!



The 1st place prize (the 30-06 Browning X-Bolt Medallion rifle) was accepted by Barb Randall on

behalf of her son, Blake Randall of Chanhassen, the 25-year-old winner. They are property owners on Wood Lake, in the Outing / Emily area. The gun is shown being presented by Darril Wegscheid, RALALA Board Member.

The third place (\$250 Target gift certificate) winner was Lauri Barry of Superior WI, who has property on Lawrence Lake, and is also a RALALA member.



If you have never attended the actual raffle event at the Village Inn on Labor Day weekend,



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**Library News by Carol Pierce**



We had a very busy summer at the library, both with children and adults --thank you

for your patronage. We will be switching to our winter schedule on November 1. Hours will be posted in the paper, on the door, and magnets will be available for your fridge.

The Emily-Outing Chamber of Com-

merce has given us tremendous financial support this year; we appreciate it immensely. The CTC phone company gave us a check to buy a new phone system which was desperately needed, so we appreciate them as well. A huge thank you to all of our willing and enthusiastically supportive volunteers as board members, worker bees, town board members, gardeners, and story time readers!!!

The "Sentence to Serve" program saved our necks and backs by hauling tables and boxes, plus unloading the books

from the boxes, and helped tear it all down and put everything away after the Memorial Day book sale.

It amazes me that people are still moving into the area or discovering our beautiful library for the first time and they are always blown away by such a wonderful facility in such a small town. Everyone has contributed and made it so great--thank you to all of you.

**Safety Buoy Replacement and Maintenance by Roger Brekken**

As most of you know, RALALA takes responsibility for placing, maintaining and replacing our water safety buoys although the cost of the buoys themselves is borne by the Cass County Sheriff's office.

Each year we assess the condition of each of our buoys. When there are

missing buoys or buoys that are so badly deteriorated that they no longer properly serve their function, we petition the Sheriff for replacements.

In the last couple of years we have experienced a fair amount of both badly deteriorated buoys and chains rusting through. causing buoys to come adrift.

Three replacement buoys were obtained from the Cass County Sheriff in 2015. Two were used to replace waterlogged buoys that sat so low in the water that they could not easily be seen. One buoy was deployed on the Lawrence lake side of the connector channel between Lawrence and North Roosevelt. By placing this buoy in that

location we are hoping to slow down watercraft that are currently shooting out of the channel into Lawrence Lake at high speed. In addition to the replacement buoys we also replaced some chains and repaired some of the existing fleet of buoys.



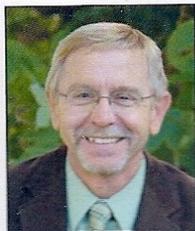
**2015 EQI Donors**

A big thank you to all of our friends and members who made Environmental Quality Initiative Fund donations in 2015. These donations, above and beyond the \$25 of annual dues, give RALALA the opportunity to further pursue the Association's environmental objectives. We would like to acknowledge those who generously made such donations this year:

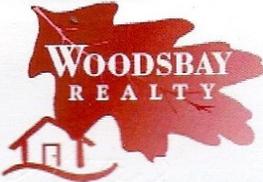
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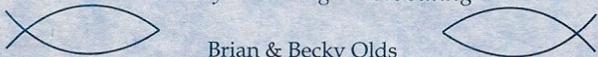
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## Meeting with DNR—Report by Roger Brekken

On September 10 an eight person RALALA delegation met with Marc Bacigalupi, Regional Fisheries Manager, in Brainerd and covered a wide array of topics. Here is a brief description of the discussion:

**Woods Bay Project:** This project is not yet finalized. It is to be an Aquatic Management Area to protect sensitive shore line areas and will be managed by the DNR when completed. The project is still moving forward with the Leech Lake Watershed Foundation taking the lead role. RALALA and many of its members have contributed towards the purchase of the property. Currently the property is being appraised and other State requirements are being met.

**Lake Water Levels:** We raised the question as to who controls the level of our lakes. Basically the level of South Roosevelt, North Roosevelt and Lawrence Lakes are all controlled by the outlet dam at the south end of South Roosevelt at the beginning of Crooked Creek (Crooked Creek then flows to Pug Lake, then Mitchel Lake, then Eagle Lake and on into Little Pine Lake in the Whitefish chain). The dam was built in 1936 as a WPA project and is now under the jurisdiction of the DNR. It was originally designed to have up to 1.6 feet of wooden stop logs in place and a wooden catwalk. This allowed adjustment of the

water level by up to 1.6 feet. The dam has since been modified, however, and is currently a concrete fixed sill dam which means that it cannot be adjusted. As long as water levels are above the height of the dam sill, water will flow out into the creek.



It was last inspected by the DNR in 2008 and determined to be in fair and stable condition.

**Fish Stocking Update:** In odd years Roosevelt is stocked in the fall with 390 pounds of 5 to 6 inch walleyes. At 20 fish per pound that amounts to around 7800 walleye. In the spring of even years, 390 muskie in the 10 to 11 inch range are stocked. It is expected that the muskie will grow at the rate of 3 to 4 inches per year until they get to 30 inches long when their growth rate will slow. Females grow faster and get larger than males. Muskies can live up to 20 years with the average being in the 10-12 year range. It was reported that a 45 inch muskie was caught in Roosevelt in 2015. The DNR endgame for

Roosevelt muskie is a population of 1/3 fish per total lake area and a self regulating population. The lake will be surveyed for muskie in 2018 as part of the general fish survey conducted every six years. Marc gave us a copy of a 2008 paper which supposedly is the latest word on the effect of muskies on the fishery. It concludes that the main prey of muskies are white suckers, yellow perch and ciscoes, and that muskies coexist well with walleye and that there were no deleterious effects on the walleye fishery from muskie stocking. Subsequent to our meeting, however, the Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates has raised concerns about the DNR muskie program. They are concerned that the program may be adversely impacting lake ecosystems as more muskies are stocked and keeper sizes are raised. The Pelican Lake Property Owners Association has asked the DNR not to stock more muskies until an Environmental Assessment Worksheet can be completed. The DNR is currently launching a program to promote muskie stocking in Gull Lake.

**Invasive species:** Ruth Lake milfoil was treated late summer with 2-4-D. It is too soon to evaluate the results. Washburn Lake milfoil is under control with very few plants remaining

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and those are being hand pulled by scuba divers.

Adult zebra mussels were found in Ruth at the site of a VRBO (vacation rental by owner) with an uninspected launch site. The site will be treated this fall with zequanox and copper sulfate (see separate report).

Marc opined that the zebra mussel veliger (tiny microscopic baby mussels) test currently in use is not a good early warning detection test as it doesn't detect them until there are lots of them in the water column. As you probably already know, RALALA lakes have been sampled and are currently zebra mussel free according to those tests.

Education is a major key to invasive species control and samples can be loaned out for meetings. An interesting fact, however, is that the law is written so that it is illegal to transport zebra mussels—dead or alive. So getting a sample of dead mussels to a meeting for educational purposes might require a special permit.

A new invasive species that has been found in Michigan lakes for about 15 years and is now spreading in Wisconsin has also been discovered in two lakes in Minnesota. It is starry stone-wort. It is a grass-like form of algae



and a relative of musk grass. It can produce dense mats on the water's surface and displaces native aquatic plants and is resistant to herbicide.

However the invasive species that keeps Marc awake at night is the spiny water flea. It is in Mille Lacs Lake and Voyager National Park. Spiny water fleas are zooplankton animals with adults ranging from 1/4 to 3/8 inch long. They have a single



long tail with small spines along its length. They eat the zooplankton which are important food for native fishes. They have caused the decline or elimination of some native zooplankton.

Marc indicated that the DNR has no policy for assistance in remediation of invasive species and legislation would be required.

Mille Lacs Lake: With all the controversy around Mille Lacs Lake, some discussion followed. The DNR estimates the fish harvest by a complicated statistical formula including the number boats, trailers, sampled catches etc. Feeding fish with pellet food like ocean farm fisheries is not good because it would add undesirable nutrients into the water. The water clarification caused by zebra mussels has leveled off with not much change since 2000. However there are still zillions of zebra mussels in the lake. He reported that the 2013 class of walleye in Mille Lac are doing well.

**Northern Pike:** Marc reported that north central Minnesota lakes are overrun with small "hammer handle" northern pike. The DNR is considering going to a northern limit of 10 fish under 22 inches, a protected slot of 22-26 inches, and a limit of two pike over 26 inches.

**President's Letter Cont'd from p. 1**

tinued to do sampling for tests of our water quality and collected samples to test for the presence of zebra mussels. In addition, Darril and I were able to trench an electric line from our I-LID on Lawrence to a sunny location in Luscher Park and help our contractor move the solar collector to a new pole where we can get more sunlight to reliably power our I-LID for more hours of the day.

We did add one new event to our calendar this year. In August we had a party to show our appreciation for all of the people who had volunteered to

help RALALA this year. More than 40 people attended a BBQ at my home. I believe that everyone had a good time and relished the opportunity to get together and socialize with others who think RALALA activities are worth some of their time and energy. We plan to make this an annual event. Volunteer next year and I will make sure you get an invitation!

Finally, I wanted to mention that those wonderful smoked pork shoulders that we sold in advance of the 4th of July will be back in 2016! Mike Van Straaten has generously agreed to do frozen pork

shoulders for us again next year. We will put a notice up on the website in the spring (and in the first newsletter) to let you know orders are being taken. If you didn't try one of these last year, make sure you put this on your to-do list for 2016. All of our guests thought this was the best pulled pork they had ever had, and we have had similar reports from many other buyers of these pork shoulders.

Send me an e-mail or give me a call if you have any ideas for us to implement in 2016. Have a nice winter everyone!

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## CROOKED LAKE TOWNSHIP AIS REPORT – 2015 by Ed Evans

The summer of 2015 is indeed over and the boats, docks, and lifts are once again coming out of the lakes to be stored for the winter. From the lack of any positive sightings by boat owners, the marina, or Lake Service Providers, it looks like the lakes of Crooked Lake Township have dodged the AIS bullet once again this year.

Most of the credit for avoiding AIS contamination (outside of luck) must be given to the Cass County SWCD (Soil & Water Conservation District) AIS Program. They are the folks who organized, operated, and funded the Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination Program for the lakes in Crooked Lake Township in 2015. The Cass County AIS Plan uses funding the Minnesota state Legislature allocated to the Counties to fight AIS (\$ 10M per year – divided up among the counties).

However, some of the credit also must go to the members of the Lake Associations, Lake Service Providers, and the Township residents themselves. These folks are very aware and concerned about the impact of AIS contamination, and they transfer that awareness and concern to visitors as well. The Lake Association members who perform as the “Landing Ambassadors” are making a major contribution by visiting the Watercraft Inspectors to encourage them, by helping resolve any issues, and in general making them feel supported and com-

fortable at the landings. Other Lake Association members contribute by putting ZMEWS (Zebra Mussel Early Warning System – PVC pipe on a rope off your dock) on their docks.

Many of the Lake Association members live (and vote) in the Twin Cities rather than Crooked Lake Township. They and their families come to the lake cabin to fish, boat, swim, and have family fun. Since their visits to the lake are usually weekends, time is at a premium, so they feel there is little they can do to contribute to the Lake Association or the AIS program. Actually there is a major role these people can play in the AIS fight. The Senators and Representatives from the Lake Country like Cass and Crow Wing Counties are very much in the know about AIS and the need for state policy and funding support because they live here. The Legislature people from the Twin Cities know almost nothing about AIS and feel their constituents are not interested either.

If the Lake Association members who live and vote in the Twin Cities would write to/call/email their Representatives in the Twin City area and make them aware that you, as one of their constituents, are very aware and concerned about AIS and are directly and personally impacted by the social and economic impact of AIS contamination in our lakes, those elected officials will see that AIS is not just an “up north” issue and become more supportive.

### *That would be a huge contribution!*

Another major contribution the Lake Association member can make is to volunteer. An hour or two on whatever weekend you happen to be at the lake can make a difference. Spend that hour touring the boat landings, talking to the Inspectors, answer any questions (or get answers), support what they are doing, and help make them feel comfortable – that they are not out there alone. 20 minutes spent at each of the 3 landings can make a big difference. Most of the Inspectors are not local and know very little about the Township or the people that live here. The Inspectors said this year that the visits were very welcome and made a big difference. ***Be a Landing Ambassador!***

And finally, volunteers are needed for a variety of Lake Association and Township activities, including the AIS Committee. We are looking for new people and new AIS ideas on how we can contribute to the AIS effort. We meet every couple of weeks during the summer for about 2 hours, not a big time investment. Please talk to your Lake Association AIS member about the time/location of the meetings.

This will be my final AIS Summary Report as I have retired as the Chairman of the AIS Committee. Bob Holman of the Lake Washburn Assn. will be the new Chairman of the AIS Committee.

## RALALA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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