

2006 Minnesota Lake Association of the Year

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December 2010

High Water by Kenzie Phelps

Mark your calendar...

- Dec 2 Healthy Lakes— 6:30 PM
Palmer Town Hall
- Dec 11 BLCA Board Meeting—
8:30 AM Palmer Town
Hall
- Dec 13 Palmer Twp Board—7 PM
- Dec 21 Clear Lake Twp Board—
7 PM
- Jan 6 Healthy Lakes— 6:30 PM
Palmer Town Hall

If you were around in late October/early November you most certainly noticed the high water on the chain of lakes and Elk River. The water level at one point exceeded the 964.2 foot mark. Why is this important? Water at or above this level triggers the “slow-no wake” restriction in Palmer Township Ordinance no. 104 and Clear Lake Ordinance no. 4. Had this high water episode been during the boating season it would have meant that boaters reduce speed to eliminate wakes. Boaters violating the “slow-no wake” ordinance would have been guilty of a gross misdemeanor. More importantly, however, is the potential damage to shore land caused by the combination of high water and high boat wakes. Fortunately there were few boater during the high water episode.

But there is more to this story. Depending on the winter scenario ahead of us, we could be in for high water again in the spring. According to Roger Stradl, DNR hydrologist, a combination of conditions could lead to high water after the snow melt next spring. If we have an early snow cover before the ground freezes, the snow insulates the ground and there is better chance for water penetration in the spring. Less chance of high water.

With the ground fairly well saturated now, however, plus a high water table, combined with the ground freezing before adequate snow cover, there will be less water penetration into the soil from the snow melt. With normal snow depths, and/or early 2011 spring rains, we could then easily experience another high water event. Roger Stradl said another complicating factor is the trend for bigger rain [or snow] events in a shorter amount of time.

What to do? Here are some simple suggestions:

- Secure your wooden dock sections and anything else that floats before the snow arrives.
- Clean out your fire pits that might leach ashes, and therefore nutrients, into the lakes and river.
- Pay attention to the water level and the reasons for having “slow-no wake restrictions.” High water and high wakes can erode shore land and allow nutrient runoff.
- If you have a structure [like a boat house] close to the ordinary high water level, make sure your possessions are elevated to prevent high water damage to them, and contamination to the lakes.

So pay attention, and in the event of high water take the necessary steps to protect your belongings, and more importantly protect our lakes.

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President's Letter

The Table

Imagine a formal dining room with a large table, and the table needs to be moved. If I try to move it myself, it is going to be quite a task, and I might as well make a chiropractic appointment before I even start. I will ask (tell, he really doesn't have a choice) my husband to help me. We will be done in half the time.

Suddenly the kids see what we are doing and come to help (a good imagination is required to picture this.) The heavy load is getting lighter by the minute. Then a neighbor drops by, family stops in, and now we have a dozen people to help move the huge table.

A back breaking task is now easily accomplished in minutes with minimal effort by all involved.

Now imagine the table represents all the activities of the BLCA. It's a really big table, and we have some great members that volunteer their time and talents to accomplish all that is involved. At this point it is still a heavy load for them. If we could get a few more people to volunteer to help out the others here and there, it would make a world of difference in the ease of accomplishing our goals.

If you would like to help, let us know. There is a wide range of things to help with, from putting address labels on envelopes or coordinating the annual garage sale to running the food booth at Palmer Day. Your time and talents are so welcomed and much appreciated. I hope you consider joining us at the table.

Barb Aaberg, BLCA President
Rush Lake
743-4380

BLCA Palmer Day Food Booth

After an extended run, Cam and Kim are retiring from managing the Palmer Day Food Booth. Thankfully they have a detailed outline for operating the food booth and will help explain, train and support the new team.

We are looking for a group or individual to handle the largest fund-raising program of the BLCA. If you love the smell of grilled burgers, French fries and cheese curds, and want to help out the BLCA, give Karen Jones a call for more details 743-4727.

From Your Board...

Items from the November 2010 BLCA Board Meeting included:

Committee Assignments

Membership Chairperson: Sandra Hart

Directory: White Pages: Steve Demeules/Yellow Pages: Barb Aaberg

Events and Programs Chairperson: Laura Schnell

Grants

SERP II grant is in to the DNR for additional shoreland restoration projects; will find out in January if it is accepted. There will be another shoreland restoration workshop in April 2011.

Palmer Directory

These should be distributed to all areas by now—let us know if there are changes to be made.

Budget and Fund-Raising

In the process of finalizing the application for a change to 501.c..3 status which would allow tax deductions for donations and the ability to apply for more grants.

Palmer Township

The Palmer Township Board meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Township Hall. Let **Kathy Miller** know of agenda items by email at palmertwp@mywdo.com by noon on Tuesday before the meeting or call her at 743-2100.

Clear Lake Township

The Clear Lake Township Board meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:0 PM in the Township Hall. Agenda items should get to **Debra Seeley** at 743-2485 by Thursday morning before the meeting. Visit the township website at: www.ClearLakeTownship.com.

Best Management Practices for Protecting Lakes and Streams

by Mike Punton

Happy Holidays!

Based on several discussions I had with lakeshore property owners this past season, I would conclude everyone felt pretty good about the lake clarity and overall conditions this past season. I would also submit the BLCA played a big part in those favorable results. Continually building awareness on ways to improve lake quality and having the member support to execute the plan via shoreland restoration projects, buffer zones, weed control programs and rain gardens, have cumulatively and positively affected the long-term health of our lakes.

As 2010 winds down, it's a perfect time to start thinking about what role you can play to support our quest for healthy lakes. Will it be a shoreline restoration project, a new rain garden for your property, or perhaps just starting a buffer zone?

There are several Best Management Practices (BMP's) that you can take to reduce the impact of land use on water resources. BMP's reduce erosion, runoff volume, sediment, pesticide and fertilizers in runoffs and protect water quality.

Who benefits from BMP's? Everyone!

- Recreation
 - Wildlife
 - Aesthetics
- Property Values

Here's what you can do for water quality:

Create a buffer of native vegetation on your shoreland

- Improves habitat
- Filters pollutants

Yard Waste – not in the lake

- Grass clippings and leaves contain nutrients which cause algae blooms
- Compost yard waste or haul to a compost facility

Reduce runoff to lakes and streams

- Install pervious materials instead of asphalt for driveways and walkways
- Install a rain garden to capture runoff
- Remove lawn clippings and leaves from driveways and walkways

Lawn Chemical Management

- Use zero phosphorus fertilizer
- Fertilize according to soil needs
- Reduce use of fertilizer, Grass clippings have nitrogen and phosphorus-recycle them back into the soil
- Clean up fertilizer from hard surfaces
- Do not fertilize near the lake
- Raise mowing height to 3 ½ inches- improves turf vigor and reduces need for chemicals

Value native aquatic plants

- Provide fish habitat
- Provide food for waterfowl
- Take up phosphorus
- Protect the shoreline from erosion

Lastly, for those who enjoy ice fishing, please remind everyone to pick up after themselves. The BLCA provides dumpsters at each landing for this purpose. Each spring there is a significant amount of trash left on the ice. There's absolutely no reason for this type of behavior. Let's work together to keep our lakes clean.

The Lake Report



Briggs Lake Chain Association
See us on the Web at
<https://www.briggslakechainassociation.com>

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The Lake Report is published for the benefit of BLCA members and lake residents. Please submit articles and feedback by the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next issue. E-mail or snail mail copy to the Editor.

F.Y.I.

BLCA Membership

Join the BLCA and receive our newsletter and a membership card to display at your residence. Only BLCA paid members will receive the Lake Report and Green Sheet—don't miss out! Your membership dues are \$30.00. If you need a copy of the form, please go to the BLCA website or contact a board member.

To have *The Lake Report* sent to your computer, please include your email address on your membership form.

If you need to mail dues or donations, please send it to the BLCA Treasurer, Karen Jones, 11271 42nd Street, Clear Lake, MN 55319.

Keep your eyes open for the 2011 Lake Weed Spraying Forms and the BLCA Membership Forms. They should be arriving in your mailboxes within the next few weeks.

This 'n That

Have a safe and happy holiday season!

For New, Clear Ice Only

- 2" or less - STAY OFF
- 4" - Ice fishing or other activities on foot
- 5" - Snowmobile or ATV
- 8" - 12" - Car or small pickup
- 12" - 15" - Medium truck
-

Remember that these thicknesses are merely guidelines for new, clear, solid ice. Many factors other than thickness can cause ice to be unsafe.



Please send news about BLCA members to Marilyn Humble, Sunshine Chairperson, so that a card may be sent for such things as illness or a death in the family. Contact her at 743-2741 or imhumble@mywdo.com

Keep an eye out for new neighbors, and let the BLCA know so that we can welcome them to the area.

Thanks to all who support the BLCA thru dues, donations, and volunteering.

The BLCA Board meets year 'round. Meetings are on the second Saturday of the month at the Palmer Town Hall beginning at 8:30 a.m. You're welcome to attend if you'd like. If there are items you'd like the Board to consider, please let any board member know. If you'd like to serve on a BLCA Committee or help with BLCA programs or projects, we'd love to have your help—simply email us at blca@briggslakechainassociation.com or let any of the board members know of your interest and preference.