

The Blackwater Blurb

Blackwater Lake Newsletter Volume 15 Number 2 Fall/Winter 2019

Blackwater Lake Association's mission is to preserve the resources we have for future generations by undertaking necessary actions and providing a forum for ongoing education.

The Magic of Trees

Did you know?

In addition to providing shade and adding beauty and value to our property, trees provide many more benefits.



"Plans to protect our air and water, wilderness and wildlife are in fact plans to protect man."

Stewart Udall



Trees can add music to our lives! The ecosystem they create provides habitat for birds and other animals.



Trees help keep our lake clean! They reduce surface water runoff from heavy rains, decreasing soil & bank erosion and the accumulation of sediments and harmful chemicals in the lake.



Trees increase our drinking water supply! Trees increase ground water recharge.



Trees can keep us warm! Evergreen trees can be used to reduce wind speed and thus loss of heat from your cabin in the winter by as much as 10 to 50 percent.



Trees help us breath! One large tree can supply a day's supply of oxygen for four people.



Trees clean our air! An acre of trees absorbs enough carbon dioxide in a year to equal the amount produced when you drive a car 26,000 miles.

Compiled by Erv Evans, NC State University and provided by Pat McKee



Greetings to All on Blackwater Lake,

- ☞ We had a fantastic spring, summer and fall! In my writing thank you cards to you, I referred to Blackwater Lake as our GREAT LAKE and was corrected by someone who said there are only 5 great lakes. I disagree—this is truly a great lake! And we have so many fine people working to keep it that way! Many thanks to everyone involved!
- ☞ Our board meetings went well this year with no major problems looming. We discussed your comments on the membership applications. Thank you!
- ☞ Our Cabin Coffees were great with 18-22 people attending each of the three gatherings. We will continue them next year. Just let any board member know that you want to host a gathering and we will help from there.
- ☞ The Annual Meeting went very well along with a successful silent auction and fine luncheon. We were privileged to meet our new Conservation Officer Jacqueline Hughes as well as enjoy live music by Tim and Jan Marr.
- ☞ The 4th of July Parade was a success as usual and we fortunately dodged the rain storms all around.
- ☞ We have a new chairperson Pat McKee to lead our Tree Seedling Program. Many thanks to Court Leckert for a job well done over many years.
- ☞ At the Fall Board Meeting, Scott Agre was unanimously voted as Director-at-Large. Welcome to the Team, Scott!
- ☞ We ask you to consider receiving our newsletter the Blackwater Blurb electronically on your computer. If you haven't signed up yet, please email me and I will add you to the list.
- ☞ Also, if you have forgotten to join the Blackwater Lake Association there will be a small reminder on your address label or in the email sent out. Please fill out the application and send it, along with a \$30.00 check, to our treasurer Linda Burns.
- ☞ We seem to be holding our own with all the Aquatic Invasive Species that are popping up on nearby lakes. We thank all of you for your continued care and caution. Keep up the great work as it benefits us all in more ways than we can imagine.
- ☞ Lastly, if you have any questions or issues please contact any of our board members and we will discuss it. As we have said before, we can't always fix the problems but we definitely discuss them.

See you on the water!!

Salty Lakes in Minnesota?

by Carolyn Dindorf

1 teaspoon of salt
contaminates 5 gallons of
water



One teaspoon of salt contaminates five gallons of water. Our lakes, streams and groundwater are becoming saltier. Chloride in salt is toxic to aquatic life, including fish and invertebrates such as mayflies, which provide

food for fish. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has a standard for chloride of 230 milligram per liter. This is about a teaspoon of salt in five gallons of water. There are 50 Minnesota lakes and streams that exceed the standard. Another 75 are considered at risk for exceeding the standard. Many more may exist but are not tested for chloride. Our lakes naturally mix in the spring and fall, delivering oxygen to the bottom waters and exchanging nutrients. Salt disrupts our natural lake turnover. Water with dissolved salt is heavier and sinks to the bottom of the lake. This creates layers with salty water on the bottom and clean water on top. These layers do not mix as they normally would in the spring and fall with wind and temperature changes. Without the usual mixing, lake-bottom waters become saltier and low in oxygen and eventually toxic to aquatic life.

What is the source of chloride? Most of the chloride comes from winter maintenance. We use a lot of road salt (NaCl) and other chloride salts to melt ice. The second and third largest source is either fertilizer or wastewater depending on where you are in the state. Wastewater is high in chloride due to the use of water softeners. Since

we are not in an area served by sanitary sewer we rely on onsite septic systems. If you have a septic system and use a water softener, the salt is making its way into the groundwater and maybe to surface water. Septic systems or wastewater treatment plants do not remove chloride. In fact, we have no practical way of removing chloride from water. We must prevent it from reaching water.

What can we do to keep our lakes low in salt?

- ▶ If you use a water softener, make sure you really need one.
- ▶ If you have high iron, use an iron filter.
- ▶ If you need a softener, purchase a salt efficient one. Upgrade to a new one if you have an old timer-based softener.
- ▶ If you have hard surfaces like your driveway and sidewalk, minimize your use of salt. Focus on shoveling, plowing or blowing the snow to keep them clear, and only use salt if absolutely necessary.
- ▶ Fix drainage problems that lead to icy conditions.
- ▶ If there is a snow storm or freezing rain event, stay home if possible. If we reduce the demand for clear roads and parking lots right after a storm, they can use less salt.



Blackwater Lake is not likely at high risk for exceeding the chloride standard due to the lack of hard surfaces in our watershed, but we do have a number of roads nearby. If you want to learn more about salt and water quality, and what you can do to reduce salt use, visit the MPCA website at www.pca.state.mn.us/water/chloride-salts.



Al & Sue Peterson

“Coming to the lake is all about family,” says Al and Sue Peterson whose family initially bought land in the 1930s on Blackwater because they liked to hunt and fish. Among the families, they purchased five lake lots on the northwest side. At age 12, Sue

remembers coming to the lake with her dad Chuck Barnum and grandfather Rich Ebner.

Now four generations later, Al & Sue continue the tradition of trips to the lake. And their list of fun is long these days—fishing, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, 4-wheeling, gun targeting practice and never-to-forget campfires with s’mores. Their 5-year-old grandson Justin loves the lake but thinks he sees sharks in the water. Sometimes he’ll shout, “Grandma, watch out for the sharks!” Of course there are cabin projects. Al says, “Sue dreams them up and I do them.” The latest has been building a rack for kayaks and making chair covers.

Originally from Glencoe and Staples, the Petersons have driven to the lake from Maple Grove for the last 40 years. Al is a retired design draftsman from the HVAC industry and Sue enjoyed a career in the insurance field. Their two sons and two grandsons, ages 8 and 5, also enjoy their special time at Blackwater.

Membership/Treasurer Reports *Linda Burns, Treasurer*

Membership. Last year, we had our highest number of members ever, 142! The previous two years we had 116 members and 128. To date for the current year, we already have 123 members. Please look at your mailing label on this Blurb; if it says “Please Join”, you haven’t paid this year’s dues. If it says “Paid”, we thank you for supporting Blackwater Lake Association!

Treasury summary of last year, July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019. We began 2018-19 year with a balance of \$3844 and ended the year with \$5657. Total income was \$5918; sources included membership dues \$3240, AIS/Lake Protection Fund donations \$1465, Blackwater Lake wear sales \$414, and our first Silent Auction \$799. Total expenses were \$5940; major outlays were for the Blurb, AIS activities, and Beaver control.

Treasury current year-to-date, July 1, 2019–Sept. 15, 2019. We now have two bank accounts in order to separate AIS/Lake Protection fundraising and expenses from our other activities. Our original account had a starting balance of \$5657 and current balance of \$5305 after transfers to the new AIS/Lake Protection Fund (AIS/LPF) account. The AIS/LPF had a starting balance of \$0 and a current balance of \$5098 after transfers from the original account correlating to this year’s AIS/LPF donations and the proceeds from the Silent Auction and Blackwater Lake wear sales plus the balance of the same from previous years minus previous years’ AIS expenses. This year’s Silent Auction was another success, adding \$959 to the AIS/LPF.

List of Officers & Committees

Blackwater Lake Association, Inc. is a member of ACCL (the Association of Cass County Lakes), Conservation Minnesota (formerly Minnesota Waters), LLAWF (Leech Lake Water Shed Foundation) and Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocate.

Chairperson:	Lloyd Thielmann	lloydterryt@aol.com	218-682-2504
Vice-Chairperson:	Carolyn Dindorf	cdindorf@yahoo.com	763-537-9077
Secretary:	Dodi Sletten	dsletten@comcast.net	612-991-3041
Treasurer:	Linda Burns	burns.linda3@gmail.com	612-869-3542
Director:	Becky Seemann	becky.seemann@icloud.com	651-245-6436
Director:	Shannon Klundt	Shannon.klundt@westwoodps.com	320-333-0663
Director:	Barb Laughlin	Barbie-Laughlin@hotmail.com	763-550-1946
Director:	Tim Marr	nonandbop@tds.net	218-682-3007
Director at Large	Scott Agre	scottagre01@gmail.com	913-219-5021

Healthy Lakes Committee:	Linda Burns, Becky Seemann, Lloyd Thielmann, Court Lechert, Carolyn Dindorf
Secchi Disk Readings:	Jim Sletten, Carolyn Dindorf, Bob Seemann and Lloyd Thielmann
Fish Management:	Tim Marr, Shannon Klundt and Lloyd Thielmann
Membership:	Becky Seemann, Tom Staley, Geri Staley, Linda Burns and Lloyd Thielmann
Reporter & Communications	Becky Seemann
Web Master:	Travis Skalicky
Seedlings & Septic:	Pat McKee, Craig Laughlin and Barb Laughlin
New Members Packet and mailing list:	Tom & Geri Staley , staley@uslink.net , 218-682-2532

Where Are Flying Squirrels in Minnesota?

Living in tree hollows or leafy nests, flying squirrels are the only nocturnal squirrels in Minnesota. There are two species in MN, the Southern Flying Squirrel and the Northern Flying Squirrel. Southern are found mainly in hardwood forests, while northern occur in conifer forests; their ranges overlap in Cass County.

The southern is about the size of a chipmunk and weighs about 2 ounces. The northern is slightly larger and weighs about 3 ounces. Both have a grayish-brown body, white belly, flat tail, and large eyes that help them see at night. The southern has a black ring around its eye that runs along its membrane. More aggressive and dominant than their northern cousins, the southern produces several high pitch sounds used for navigation, communication and mating. Unlike the southern species, northern are very active throughout the year and are seldom seen unless their tree dens are cut down.



Fun facts

- ▶ Flying squirrels do not fly, but glide from one perch to another. Their "flight" is made possible by a fold of skin which extends from the front to the hind feet and enables the squirrel to glide as far as 300 feet, though most glides are between 20 and 30 feet. As they approach the limb they want to land on, the loose skin acts as a parachute slowing them down. Once they land, the flying squirrel scurries to the other side of the tree to avoid predators. Many people who think they see birds flying across highways at night actually are seeing flying squirrels.
- ▶ The northern breeds once a year; females breed with only one male and will stay with that male year after year. Southern females breed

twice a year with a different male; after mating the male has nothing to do with the female or the young. Both species have 3 to 5 babies per litter.

- ▶ Flying squirrels eat a variety of fruits, nuts, insects, small birds, fungi, meat scraps and bark. Flying squirrels are frequent visitors at bird feeders, and some people have lights at the feeders so they can watch the flying squirrel's antics at night. Autumn nights are best for observing flying squirrels because they are busy gathering food for winter.
- ▶ Flying squirrels do not hibernate, but slow their body activity in winter and nest in groups to stay warm.
- ▶ The life expectancy of flying squirrels in the wild is about 6 years, but flying squirrels can live up to 15 years in zoos.
- ▶ A good way to support cavity-nesting animals like these squirrels is to promote and maintain snags. If you have a hazardous tree on your property, for instance, consider hiring an arborist to transform it into habitat rather than removing it.

I suspect the flying squirrels we hear and see at our sunflower feeders after dark are Southern Flying Squirrels. We also spread peanut butter on a tree and watch them come in and eat.

By Linda Burns

Water Protection Update



Water Protection and Aquatic Invasive Species AIS

Thank you to the Blackwater Lake aquatic invasive species AIS monitoring team for checking out our lake for AIS again this year. We are looking for many AIS that have been found in Minnesota, but especially those reported in Cass County and surrounding areas including: Eurasian watermilfoil, curly-leaf pondweed, starry stonewort and zebra mussels. Fortunately, no new AIS were reported. Please check your dock, lift and boat bottom for zebra mussels. It is easier to spot them once these are out of the water. Report any sightings to Carolyn, AIS committee chair, cdindorf@yahoo.com.

Water Quality Trends. Water quality in Blackwater Lake remains very good. The lake is showing an increasing trend in water clarity as measured by our volunteers using a Secchi disk with 30 years of data. Our average clarity was about 15 feet this year, about 0.6 feet greater than the average for the Leech Lake Watershed. Water clarity is affected by nutrients/algae growth, suspended particles and water color. Blackwater is somewhat brown colored due to organic matter in surrounding bog areas. In addition to clarity, we also measure nutrients. Lake water samples analyzed show our nutrient levels within the expected range for our area. Blackwater is considered mesotrophic or moderately nutrient rich. If we all do our part to keep fertilizers, septic drainage and other pollutants out of the lake, hopefully we can maintain this great water quality and continue to enjoy our beautiful lake.

Article courtesy of Carolyn Dindorf

Annual Meeting & Silent Auction

Many thanks to all for attending the annual meeting. It was a big turn out and lots of fun! Thank you to all of you who donated gifts to the Silent Auction and to all of you who won the bids on these wonderful gifts. We raised \$959 to be used to help protect our great waters. Together we can make a difference!



Tim & Jan Marr

GO Paperless!!

Blackwater Blurb now available via email. Help save postage and read your **Blackwater Blurb** on your cell phone, tablet or computer. Just provide your email address to Lloyd Thielmann and request to “GO PAPERLESS!”

Thank You

Judy Leeds of the Mule Lake Store for generously providing the graphic design for the **Blackwater Blurb**. We are grateful!



“Your Corner Store Since 1953”

Cabin Coffees on Blackwater



You're Invited...

Meet and visit with lake neighbors and see cabins from the inside out. In the Summer—10 to 11 am on the 2nd Friday of the month.

June 12

Tom & Robin Shannon's Cabin
On the Southwest Side
2689 Blackwater Lane NW

July 10

OPEN—Please consider hosting!
Contact Lloyd Thielmann to
volunteer at lloydterryt@aol.com

August 14

Ion Beleniuc & Wes Ceausceac
On the Southwest Side
2667 Blackwater Road Northwest



Gardell Family Wins

Congratulations to the Gardell family for winning the Best Decorated Boat Award on the July 4th Boat Parade! They took home a trophy donated by Skalicky Painting and \$100 cash donated by the Blackwater Lake Association. Their boat, with a construction theme, won the event with five of the twelve votes from those who voted.



It was a tight race between several creatively decorated boats. In addition to the Gardell's winning construction boat, there was a lemonade stand and a swan among the parading boats, as well as the traditional patriotic decor. It was obvious that people put a lot of time and effort into decorating their boats, and it was wonderful to see. In total, 22 boats made their way around the lake after dodging some holiday rain storms.

Thanks again to everyone who participated in the parade to make this such a fun event those of you who watched and waved from the shore!

by Cindy Larson

Free Tree Seedlings in 2020

Your Blackwater Lake Association Board of Directors has again voted to provide free seedlings to members. Pat McKee will run the program this year, with help from Court Lechert and Craig Laughlin. Many thanks to Court for bringing the seedling program to Blackwater Lake ten years ago, and for his capable management of the program since then!

If you are not already on Court's participant mailing list and wish to receive free seedlings this year, please email Pat McKee at mckee@gmail.com. Those on the list will receive an email in January detailing this year's plant selection and instructions for ordering. Plants will be allocated as budget allows among all who order by the deadline.

Feel free to email Pat with any questions or suggestions for tree species you'd like to see included in the program. Species selection is subject to availability. Nursery stock is provided by the Crow Wing County Soil & Water Conservation District. Watch for Pat's email in January!

by Pat McKee

Your Blackwater Lake Association at Work

Thanks to your volunteer help, donations and dues, we work together to support:

- ▶ Membership in important organizations focused on protecting water—The Association of Cass County Lakes, Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates, Conservation Minnesota, Leech Lake Area Watershed foundation
- ▶ AIS Early Detection Volunteer Monitoring Program
- ▶ AIS inspections at our public access through Cass County soil and Water Division
- ▶ AIS signs at public access
- ▶ Lake water testing samples collected
- ▶ Water quality monitoring program, lake levels, clarity and rainfall through Minnesota Waters website www.minnesotawaters.org
- ▶ Bog monitoring and removal
- ▶ Beaver control to keep waterway open
- ▶ Tree Seedling Program
- ▶ Welcome Program for new property owners

- ▶ *The Blackwater Blurb* bi-annual newsletter
- ▶ Support for First Responder Program
- ▶ Participate in Area of Cass County Lakes ACCL monthly meetings
- ▶ 4th of July Lake Parade
- ▶ Blackwater Lake annual meeting and luncheon
- ▶ Purchase of the Eagles Nest Land in collaboration with Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation
- ▶ Drinking Water Testing

Areas of Continued Concern:

- ▶ Combat Aquatic Invasive Species AIS
- ▶ Protection of sensitive shoreline properties
- ▶ Lake fishery-stocked and habitat improvement
- ▶ Lake water quality
- ▶ Shoreline run-off and reconstruction
- ▶ Destroying shoreline vegetation
- ▶ Lake phosphorus levels

Working together, everyone benefits! Please become a member for 2019-2020.

MEMBERSHIP FORM July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020. Dues \$30.00

NAME: (please print) _____ SPOUSE: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ - _____ E-mail: _____

Home Ph. (____) _____ - _____, Bus Ph.(____) _____ - _____, Cell. Ph.(____) _____ - _____

Lake Address if not your permanent residence:

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ - _____ Phone numbers (____) _____ - _____

Interests/Concerns _____

I/WE are interested in helping protect Blackwater Lake by: volunteering on the AIS Committee _____ serving on the Association Board _____ other _____

I/WE are interested in hosting cabin coffee at our home. Please call one of our board members

Included is my Blackwater Lake Membership dues of \$30 _____

And an additional donation to support Lake Protection Fund/AIS efforts on Blackwater Lake for \$20 _____
\$30 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other \$ _____ Total _____

Membership is due July 1 or at the annual meeting on July 20, 2019

Please send your completed form along with your check for dues and donations to: BLA, Inc Treasurer, Linda Burns, 6015-11th Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55417

THANK YOU!

The Blackwater Blurb

Blackwater Lake Association Newsletter
282 Norman Point Road North West
Longville, MN 56655-3284



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Mark Your Calendar

Board Meetings

May 3, 2020
June 28, 2020
Sept 27, 2020

Cabin Coffee Gathering

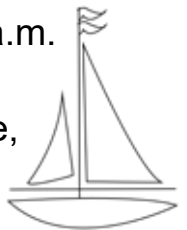
June 12, 10:00 a.m.
July 10, 10:00 a.m.
August 14, 10:00 a.m.

4th July Boat Parade

Starts at 2pm at Little Blackwater entrance,
going clockwise

Annual Meeting and Lunch

July 18, 2020 (3rd Saturday in July), starting at 9am



Submit news, events, announcements or photographs to:
Becky Seemann
2608 6th Ave NW
Longville, MN 56655
becky.seemann@icloud.com

Visit our Web Site at: <https://minnesotawaters.org/blackwaterlakeinc>