

The Blackwater Blurb

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



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Mark Your Calendar

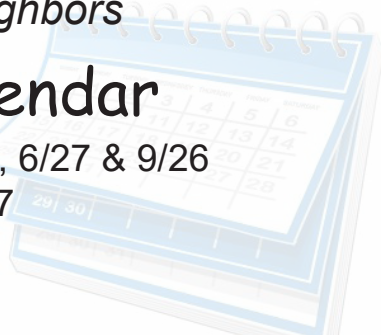
2021 Board Meetings—5/2, 6/27 & 9/26
2021 Annual Meeting—7/17

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The Blackwater Blurb

Blackwater Lake Newsletter Volume 17 Number 4 Fall 2020

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.

What's a Corona 19 Saun-toon? Creativity at it's best!

by Becky Seemann

Imagine a sauna floating in the middle of a lake and folks getting toasty warm and jumping into the water from the roof top. That's exactly what we saw this summer during our 4th of July Blackwater Boat Parade.

It all started 4 years ago when the Beleniuc and Ceausceac families (pronounced Bell-len-nuk and Cha-ous-chuk) from Plymouth, MN and formerly Moldova in Eastern Europe, went camping to Sawbill Lake in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area over Memorial Day weekend. It had been chilly, so to keep warm they decided to create a make-shift sauna by covering the fire-heated rocks of their campfire with their tent. And then they ran into the lake.

That experience inspired them to consider finding land in Minnesota's Up North woodlands on a lake where they could build a cabin and sauna as a way to enjoy nature.

About a year later, with a beautiful property on Little Blackwater, the two families figured out that the distance from their sauna to the lake was just too far to be able to run into the lake. Most people like to be hot when they hit the water.

Thus, the "saun-toon" concept was born. They built it themselves mostly in their garage. To find a pontoon that could handle the weight as well as be able to remain in the water and ice over the winter took much research. Finally, they found what they would need in Canada.

What a unique project! Be sure to keep an eye out for their special Corona 19 Saun-toon and all the fun times the four kids and their moms and dads will have on Blackwater—fishing, swimming and taking a sauna. And they aren't done yet—next is adding a slide.





Greetings to Each and Every One of You!

In this year of Covid-19, social distancing, masks, riots and whatever else comes our way—it is so nice to be in our little slice of Up North country. We are truly blessed!



☞ We really missed hooking up with all of you at our annual meeting and luncheon but your Board of Directors/BOD decided it was better to be safe than sorry. If anyone became ill because of our gathering, it would be devastating. We can all catch up hopefully next year. The BOD also meets by online conference calling to be safe.

☞ Our lake water depth had been quite low early in the season but nothing a few good rains couldn't fix. And thankfully, they did.

☞ We thought aquatic invasive species/AIS issues were under control except a big influx of Chinese mystery snails and rusty crayfish which we can't really control, but have to live with them. Unfortunately, that all changed when we learned that a zebra mussel was found in Woman Lake. We will need to be extra vigilant to prevent zebra mussels from infesting our Blackwater Lake!



☞ Our effort to send the Blurb electronically to as many of us as possible is going well. If you haven't signed up to receive it by email, please do so by sending me an email to Lloydterryt@aol.com. Please let me know and I will include you on the list of "the in crowd." All of us working together can save our Lake Association significant dollars. We now have about 100 newsletters going out electronically.

☞ It's up to all of us to be thoughtful about recycling because if we don't the Woodrow Township and our entire Cass County Recycling could be shut down. Too often the Recycling Center is being used as a garbage dump. Becky Seemann has been writing "Reduce, Reuse & Recycle" articles that have been published in the Longville *Pine Cone Press* and Hackensack's *Lucette's Gazette*. Let's all step up and do it right!

☞ Be sure to read Fact's About Fishing by Tim Marr. It is very interesting.

☞ Best to you for a healthy fall and winter!

See you on the water!!



Zebra Mussel Alert

by Clean•Drain•Dry

A single zebra mussel was recently discovered in Woman Lake. The Cass County Sheriff dive team and MN DNR are in the process of searching the lake to determine if there are more mussels present. They won't declare the lake infested with just one mussel, but it is very likely that if there is one, there are more in the lake.

We need to be extra vigilant to prevent zebra mussels from infesting Blackwater Lake. We likely have visitors that use both Woman and Blackwater Lake. If you visit Woman Lake, have your boat decontaminated before you put your boat back into Blackwater Lake. Zebra mussels and veligers (larvae) can survive in small amounts of water in many areas on your boat, motor and equipment. Adult zebra mussels will attach to your boat hull and other areas if it is in the lake long enough. Decontamination makes use of hot water pressure sprayers to kill the mussels and veligers.

No-Charge Decontamination Stations—

Hackensack/Walker: Northwood's Docks
4044 MN-371, Hackensack, MN 56452. Please call ahead 218.675.5175.

Longville: Musky House
5646 County Road 126 NE, Longville, MN 56655. Please call for appointment 218.363.2044

Follow these tips to prevent zebra mussels and other AIS from infesting Blackwater Lake:

Clean In • Clean Out

When boating or fishing in Minnesota, protect your waters by following state aquatic invasive species laws. 📺 Watch the *Clean, Drain, Dry* video.

Know The Law—You may not...

- ▶ Transport watercraft without removing the drain plug.
- ▶ Arrive at lake access with drain plug in place.

- ▶ Transport aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or other prohibited species on any roadway.
- ▶ Launch a watercraft with prohibited species attached.
- ▶ Transport water from Minnesota lakes or rivers.
- ▶ Release bait into the water.

REMEMBER...

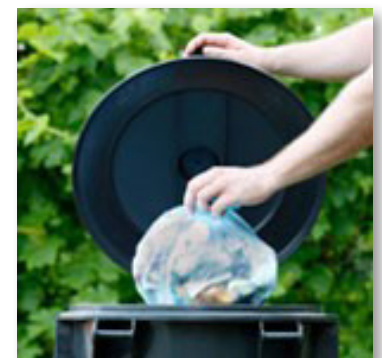
1. CLEAN all visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels, and other prohibited invasive species from watercraft, trailers, and water-related equipment before leaving any water access or shoreland.



2. DRAIN water-related equipment (boat, ballast tanks, portable bait containers, motor) and drain bilge, livewell and baitwell by removing drain plugs before leaving a water access or shoreline property. Keep drain plugs out and water-draining devices open while transporting watercraft.



3. DISPOSE of unwanted bait, including minnows, leeches, and worms, in the trash. It is illegal to release bait into a waterbody or release aquatic animals from one waterbody to another. If you want to keep your bait, you must refill the bait container with bottled or tap water.



Chinese Mystery Snails

by Carolyn Dindorf



Chinese mystery snail
Actual size (up to 3")

You may have noticed an abundance of large snails on the bottom of the lake this year, or even some floating on your shoreline. These are Chinese mystery snails, an invasive species, and Blackwater Lake is in the midst of an invasion. Mystery snails are native to Asia and were brought here as a possible human food source and through the aquarium trade. They are known as mystery snails because they give birth to completely-formed live snails suddenly and mysteriously in the spring. They compete with our native snails for habitat and food, and can foul shorelines when they die off in large numbers.



Banded mystery snail

Easily identified by their large size (up to 3" long), they are olive green to brown or reddish brown and have a trap door known as an operculum allowing survival out of water for several days. Young snails may be as small as a grain of rice and can be carried in water, mud and debris or on ropes to another lake or stream. Clean all equipment or let it dry out for one week before going to another lake to prevent spreading snails.

There is no effective control method for mystery snails. You can remove them by hand or with a net from your own shoreline. Leave the native snails in place, except the banded mystery snails which are also invasive. Dispose of them in a dry place, trash, or fire pit, never in or near a ditch, wetland, pond or any wet location. Beware, they stink when they decompose. Maybe a better management option is to eat them. According to the Sierra Club magazine, they are edible. Keep them in a bucket of cool water for a few days to purge any pollutants, boil them, extract the meat and use them like you would clams. Escargot anyone? Thanks to our Blackwater Lake Aquatic Invasive Species monitoring volunteers for keeping an eye out for new invasive species in our lake!

List of Officers & Committees

Blackwater Lake Association, Inc. is a member of ACCL (the Association of Cass County Lakes), Conservation Minnesota (formerly Minnesota Waters), NWLT (Northern Waters Land Trust) 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

July 4th on Blackwater!! *by Cindi Larson & Barbie Laughlin*



Celebrating the 4th on Blackwater

It was a hot day on the Fourth of July 2020 and a perfect day for a boat parade. Even though there were no prizes this year, participation was great! A total of 21 boats paraded around the lake, many decorated with patriotic red, white and blue, celebrating Independence Day. It was also great to see so many people waving from the shore or in the water as we cruised by. Thanks to everyone who participated or waved us on!

How did Blackwater's Boat Parade get started?

It was about 20 years ago when Barbie Laughlin on Blackwater's southwest side wanted to celebrate her favorite holiday by parading around the lake by boat with her family. They all dressed up in costumes decorated to

the hilt in red, white and blue. It was a slow start with only boat the first year, and then a second boat joined in the next year. After that, the 4th of July Parade took off and has been a highlight of Blackwater Lake ever since. Barbie says, "The joy of connecting with Blackwater neighbors on the 4th is greatly gratifying and brings more happiness than I ever imagined."



In Memory of

All of us on Blackwater Lake extend our sympathies to the families of loved ones who have passed away:

Irene Adams at age 91 on April 26, 2020

Betty Loucks at age 85 on August 21, 2019

Bart Dabrowski at age 83 on July 30, 2019

Peter Plageman at age 90 on July 18, 2019

With Sympathy

Each happiness of yesterday is a memory for tomorrow.
—Unknown

Never Ever Recycle These 14

Not everything can be recycled even if it's made up of recyclable materials.

Styrofoam—It's made of polystyrene and it IS NOT biodegradable. Best solution is to avoid it.

Bubblewrap—It's a thin film that gets tangled in recycling machines.

Power Cord Cables—Take them to an e-waste facility.

Aerosol Cans—Because of the pressurized air inside them, they are hard to recycle.

Plastic or Styrofoam Food Containers from Restaurants—Neither are biodegradable. Throw in garbage or bring your own reusable containers. Best of all—avoid them.

Plastic Bags—The bags take hundreds of years to decompose as the plastic isn't biodegradable. They are the primary source of marine debris.

Mirrors—Because of the coating used on the glass to make it reflective, they can not be recycled. Instead, donate it.

Plastic Hangers—They are problematic when sorting. Instead, take them to a thrift store.

Medical Needles—Take them to a hazardous waste site.

Paper Towels—They've probably already been recycled and their fibers are too short to go through the process again. And then they often have food or other residue on them.

Pizza Boxes—The box can't be recycled if it has food in it.

Old Clothing, Towels or Bedding—Take to your local thrift store or shelter if they are in good condition. Or cut them up and use them as rags for cleaning.

Plastic Toys—Since they are made of a variety of plastics, it is hard to recycle them.

Dishes—Most recycling programs will not accept them and they can contaminate an entire batch of recycled glass.

Scrap Wood—Treated wood with any kind of finish on it can't be recycled as the chemicals in the wood treatments make it unsafe to burn for heat or energy.

Learn more about recycling! Go online to Cass County Solid Waste & Recycling



Working together, we can make a difference to help our Earth!









Blackwater Fishing Report

by Tim Marr

One of the great things about Blackwater Lake is the fishing. Jan and I have been on the lake since about 1978 and I can tell you that this has always been a good all-around fishing lake. Whether fishing off the dock, out of a boat or through the ice there have always been plenty of sunfish, crappies, and bass and a few northern pike and walleyes.

We recently received MDNR's latest "Blackwater Lake Status of the Fishery" report. This report summarizes the results of the gill netting and electrofishing surveys that were done in 2019 and compares the results with similar surveys that have been done periodically since 1959. A summary of the report follows:



-  **Walleye**—In spite of extensive stocking efforts since 1997, gill net catch rates have remained low. This is likely due to the combination of a very high Northern Pike population and a very low yellow perch population.
-  **Northern Pike**—The Northern Pike population has continued to increase to an historic high. Most of these fish are less than 22 inches long. The MDNR strongly encourages the harvest of up to 10 of these fish under the special state regulation.
-  **Yellow Perch**—The population of these fish is at an historic low.
-  **Bluegill/Sunfish**—This population has remained fairly steady but the percentage of small fish has increased.
-  **Black Crappie**—Results are unclear because of the timing of the sampling.
-  **Largemouth Bass**—The lake continues to be an excellent bass fishery.

In addition to standard fish sampling, the MDNR did an evaluation of the health of the lake from a fish habitat and a water quality standpoint. The score that Blackwater Lake received was EXCEPTIONAL!

If you would like a copy of the complete report please contact Lloyd Thielmann at 763-226-4945 or lloydterryt@aol.com

Membership/Treasurer Reports *Linda Burns, Treasurer*

Treasury summary of last year, July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 (amounts rounded to nearest dollar)

We opened a second account, the Lake Protection Fund (LPF), as recommended by ACCL (Assoc. of Cass Lakes) to separate fundraising and expenses for lake protection activities from our general activities; the LPF account was opened with a transfer of \$2,187 from the General account which was the balance of AIS donations minus expenses from 2016 through June 30, 2019. We had a total of \$7,033 in credits which included \$3,685 in donations, \$959 from last year's Silent Auction, and \$199 from sales of BLA wear. AIS expenses totaled \$122 for monitoring tools and mowing along the public access road. The ending balance was \$6,866.

The General account started with \$5,657, was reduced to \$3,470 by the above initial transfer to the LPF, and ended with a balance of \$4,122. Income was \$5,580 in memberships dues. Expenses (excluding LPF activities) totaled \$4,929 and included printing and mailing the Blurb, culvert beaver control, lake testing, seedlings, and dues and donations to affiliates.

The combined ending balance of both accounts was \$10,988.

Membership: We had a total of 138 members last year—second only to the previous year's total of 142. To date for the current year, we have 91 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!

Meet Your Lake Neighbors

by Becky Seemann



L to R on photo: Jan, Rachel, Shawn, Kara, Adam

Jan Monroe from Lester Prairie, MN says that she married into lake life on Blackwater. It was the 1950s when her father-in-law Frank Monroe bought a cabin on the southside. She remembers that here were few trees back then because much of the surrounding land had been logged.

What did Jan and her husband DeRoyce do on their visits in those early years? There was no television, telephones or computers. Her daughter Kara would bring her Barbie dolls and son Mike would play with his plastic army-men toys. It was quiet and peaceful. Days focused on the water.

What do they like to do today? Grandson Adam, a high school senior, and Rachel, a 10th grader, like kneeboarding and being on the water. Son-in-law Shawn is always pulling the kids whether it's waterskiing, kneeboarding or pulling the Big Mabel. Jan enjoys just sitting and reading and being by the water. Kara and Jan like it when they wake early enough to kayak at sunrise to see the sun come up. Another family favorite is biking and running through the woods. Last year, granddaughter Morgan celebrated high school graduation by inviting three girlfriends to the lake—and they even stayed alone one night.

There are no big projects. When the family is at the lake it's about enjoying the moment, playing and relaxing.

What do they love the most about Blackwater? It's ever-so clear water. And of course, campfires are special.

Scott and Elizabeth Agre, knew that someday they would return to Minnesota. A few road trips to Brainerd, Lake Vermilion and Longville eventually lead them to a cabin on Blackwater Lake with its clear, clean water.



Scott & Elizabeth Agre

It was 2015 when they found their special place. After that, the two would make the 9-plus hour drive whenever they could from their home in Overland Park, Kansas, leaving in the late evening to arrive in the early morning hours. That all changed in 2018 when they retired from their careers, Scott in corporate financial analysis and Elizabeth in psychiatric nursing. They permanently relocated to Blackwater Lake.

Their Up North life is filled with joy and energy these days. What do they like to do? Everything from hiking in the woods, kayaking, jet-skiing, photographing nature and spending special time with family, which of course includes fishing. Their 12-year old granddaughter loves to fish and this summer learned how to take her first fish off the hook.

The Agre's have 3 children and a grand-daughter. On a recent family visit, their 23-year old son announced that he didn't think there were any bears in the area. Not long after that they were sitting around the dinner table and looked out the window to discover a black bear gently taking the suet and seeds out of their bird feeders.

Projects are a part of their lives too. Scott says he moves from one project to the next and so far it's included building a bunk house, a loft, a garage and pantry. Both enjoy giving back to the community. Elizabeth volunteers at Tossed and Found and the Gallery of New Creations. Scott is active with the Woodtick Wheelers ATV Club supporting the Cass County Search & Rescue through the Sheriff's Department. He also serves on Blackwater Lake Association's board.

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 2020-2021.

MEMBERSHIP FORM July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021. 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 wish to receive The Blurb via email address(es): _____

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, 2020

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!!!