

The Loon Call

Official Newsletter of Pipe and North Pipe Lakes Protection & Rehabilitation District

APRIL 23, 2009

www.pipelakes.org

BEAUTIFUL BUFFER ZONES

BY GERRY GANSKE

Carol and I always knew we were extremely fortunate to be on one of the cleanest lakes in Wisconsin. Slowly over the years we could see a steady decline in the water clarity and cleanliness. There is debris on the beach, plant particles floating in the water, slime like matter on the water toys (rafts, docks, pontoon boats, etc). Very little of this was present in the lake when we first obtained our spot on Pipe Lake more than thirty years ago. The decline of the lake is due to many factors, but we asked ourselves, "What can we do that may make a difference, even if it is only in some small way?"

We learned about buffer zones at one of our lake meetings: their benefits in protecting the lake and providing habitat for wild life. Buffer zones filter nutrients from runoff rain water, thereby keeping our lake cleaner. We were already aware of the fact that the value of our property is directly related to the cleanliness of our lake.

In the fall of 2004, we planned and planted our buffer zone. The planning phase was guided by some very knowledgeable people at the Dragon Fly Nursery in Amery, WI. We also learned that, at that time, some financial assistance was available in the form of a grant. We applied and were awarded a grant. 4000 plants and many hours later, the buffer was completed. It was now in the hands of Mother Nature. As usual, she has done a very creditable job. From the 1 in. x 1 in. plugs that were planted emerged plants that are now more than 3 ft. tall and 6 in. across. You can see the results in our pictures—or drive by in your boat!

We now have frequent visitors such as butterflies, humming birds, frogs, etc. Our view of the lake has been enhanced by the seemingly endless parade of flowers from spring to fall, as each of the various plants bloom in their own time.

The goal of creating a buffer zone is to restore the shoreline.....both on the shore and in the water. Try it! You will enjoy a new dimension in lake shore living and help keep our lake clean for our children, grandchildren, and future generations.

Q & A

Q: Where can I find information about the condition of Pipe and North Pipe Lakes?

A: Log on to our website: www.pipelakes.org

We have links to each of our reports so that you can see all of the findings, maps and recommendations.



From bare to beautiful— a healthy change for the lake and added habitat for the birds and butterflies. Pictures show progression from 2004 to 2008.

Save the Date

Boat Parade July 4
Rain Date July 5

Family and
Friends Picnic Aug 22

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FIRE DESTROYS N. PIPE HOME



Fire destroyed the Thill home on the west side of North Pipe Lake March 31, 2009. The fire started in the garage. The family all escaped without harm, but the combined efforts of several fire departments were not able to prevent the house from burning. Kevin and Brooke Thill, and their children Dylan (16), Mick (10), Isabella (5) and Walter (4) want to thank all those who have offered their support. The family will move to 2190 West Pipe Lake Court while they determine how to rebuild. Dylan wants his customers to know that he will be offering his yard care services again this summer.

2009 CALENDAR COMMISSION MEETINGS

May 8 5:30 PM Commissioner Meeting
2198 W. Pipe Lake CT

May 23 9AM Special District Meeting
Christ Church

Sept 5 9AM Annual District Meeting
Christ Church

DISTRICT MEETING SUMMARY April 3, 2009

- Finalized report of 2008 Property Owner Survey. Report will be posted on website in late April. See www.pipelakes.org
- Authorized District grant request to DNR for funds to restore shoreland buffer zones and implement upland water diversion techniques (rain gardens, etc); reset the culvert on 20th Street and address erosion in related stream; design and implement nutrient holding pond south of 230th Ave. and implement four tree falls. Authorized funding for limited professional project coordination and administration.
- Set dates for picnic and boat parade.
- Identified need for increased volunteer participation to complete water quality projects.

PRIVATE PROPERTY

With the return of warmer weather we are all excited to be enjoying the beauty of our area. Please **be a good neighbor** and remember that the woods, fields and meadows in our watershed are all private property. No people should be using private driveways, field roads or trails on foot or with a vehicle without current, specific **permission of the land owner**. Dogs need to be leashed and kept off of private lands.

SAFETY CERTIFICATION COURSE

Wisconsin law requires that motorcraft operators born after 1/1/89 have a boating education safety certificate or its equivalent (driver's license). Pipe and North Pipe Lakes Water Protection and Rehabilitation District, in cooperation with Deputy Tammi Larson of the Polk County Sheriff's Department will present a motorized boating safety and certification course **June 13 and 14, 2009. The class is targeted for jet ski and motorboat operators between the ages of 11 and 20 years old.**

The classroom portion of the training will be done at the Johnstown Town Hall, 2181 20th St./County Road G. The in-boat portion will be done at the public beach. Registration on **Saturday** is open 12:30 – 1:00 PM and the class will run from 1 – 4. **Sunday**, the second half of the classroom training will begin at 12:00 pm at the Town Hall and move to the public beach for the hands-on portion. The class will end at 5:00 pm.

Registration for the course is limited. We must have at least ten students to offer the class and are not allowed to exceed twenty-five. You may register by forwarding a check made out to "DNR" for \$10.00 to Kent Wilson. Be sure to include the student's name, birth date and contact information including home and lake addresses and phone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Registration must be received no later than **June 1, 2009**. Send the check and registration to **Kent Wilson, 656 Montcalm Place, St. Paul, MN 55116**. Call (651) 698-8494 if you have questions.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration, set-up/knockdown and to provide snacks/drinks for breaks. We also need transportation to the beach on Sunday for class members. Let Kent know if you can help.

More information on Wisconsin boating safety and law may be obtained by calling the Wisconsin DNR 1-888-936-7463 or visiting www.dnr.wi.gov/

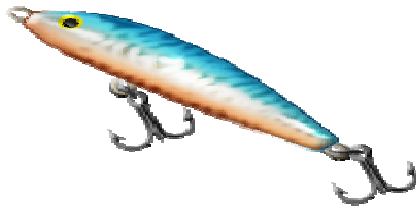
You can also find an on-line course for those over the age of fourteen at:

www.boat-ed.com/wi



FISH STOCKING UPDATE

The DNR will be stocking our lakes with 3200 seven inch walleye fingerlings in the Fall of 2009. The survival rate will be monitored one month later. The District will delay our proposed stocking of larger fingerlings until the success of the DNR stocking is determined.



LAKE MONITORING OPPORTUNITY

The Lake District is seeking a volunteer to become an alternate lake monitor for North Pipe Lake. Volunteers currently measure clarity every two weeks from May to October with a black and white disk lowered into the lake until the disk disappears. Temperature, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, and chlorophyll are also measured but less often than clarity. These measurements, from both lakes, help the District manage the lakes both for today's users and for future generations.

No prior experience is required, just an interest in accurately following Wisconsin's lake monitoring procedures. Our lake and stream monitoring team currently consists of Dick Hollar, Mark Knutson, Dan Paulson, and Larry Bresina. Please contact Larry (651-735-0019, 715-822-5650, labbresina@comcast.net) for more information on what is involved with this opportunity to enjoy time on the water while helping protect our lakes.

WE NEED YOU!



Commissioners Tom O'Hern, Carol Vantine, Joe Errigo, Tom Mears and Larry Bresina. Doug Rouzer and Herschel Brown not available for picture.

What I Learned Since Last August

Helping to prepare for our District grant application, I learned some valuable lessons. As with most things in life, I seem to learn the most from my mistakes!

Check Your Assumptions: The Commissioners, DNR and Polk County staff, and a number of land owners and volunteers have contributed ideas, research, assumptions to test and expertise to many discussions and dialogues over the last year. Everyone's intent has been to identify issues, find a workable set of alternatives, select the most promising alternatives and prioritize our resulting projects. It has been challenging to absorb and weigh all the inputs, which were sometimes conflicting. At times I would jump to conclusions or someone would repeat assumptions or data that turned out to be incorrect. Those missteps were counter-productive. We had to work hard to check out every assumption and validate our project selections with several experts, the DNR, our consultant and our District 5 Year Plan.

Words Can Hurt: When a few people jumped to conclusions that the elk farm was a major source of pollution and made comments to the owner and others, it created mistrust based on inaccurate information. In fact, the elk produce very small quantities of phosphorus in their dung. So, worst case they are only minor contributors to the nutrients in that sub-watershed. The District's charge is to build trust and collaboration among the property owners that will motivate all of us to work together on goals we share. We should not act on any assumptions without verifying the facts and understanding the perspectives of all stakeholders. My apologies to the elk farm owners for the unintended negative impressions that were formed about the elk business. In fact, this family has been conscientious and proactive in stewarding their land and the lakes.

Volunteers are Critical to Maintaining Water Quality:

Without volunteers giving their time to collect samples, we can not afford to do sampling and testing of the two lakes and the various streams every year. Without volunteers exploring possible causes and alternative solutions with experts to pollution or habitat loss specific to our sub-watersheds, we can not build persuasive cases to receive grants to help pay for projects that improve our lake quality. Without volunteers to meet with individual property owners as necessary to develop and implement shoreland restoration projects, we can not leverage the grant dollars to reduce taxpayer costs. Every volunteer hour donated gives the District \$12 worth of value as our "inkind" contribution to the project.

Collaboration with Other Agencies is a Function of Shared Agendas:

Dollars are tight for everyone. However, understanding how our District's 5 Year Plan fits with DNR and Polk County objectives for the next few years has resulted in both agencies finding creative ways to support our investigations and projects. We will continue to look for other possible collaborators whose goals match up with ours.

**DISTRICT SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 23, 2009
Christ Church 9AM-11AM**

AGENDA

- **Meet Your Neighbors**
- **Approval of Minutes**
- **Audit Report for 2008**
- **Approval of Current Financial Report**
- **Update on Fish Stocking**
- **Presentation on Fire Safety**
- **Review of Education and Social Events for the Summer**
- **Update on District Grant Request (Submitted May 1, 2009)**
 - Key Elements of Five Year Plan**
 - Key Components of Grant Request**
 - Likely Time Frame for Projects**
- **Other District Business**
- **New Business**

LAKE FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING

Would you like to learn more about ...

**Native flower planting?
Rain gardens?
Landscaping for water quality?
Addressing runoff and erosion?**

Several workshops are available this summer to help you. Currently, workshops are scheduled 2PM to 5PM in Balsam Lake:

**June 26
July 10
August 7**

If the DNR approves our District grant request, the nominal charge for your registration will be covered and we may be able to add additional sessions at Pipe Lake. If you are interested in attending one of the sessions listed above, call 715-268-9992 or email harmonyenvironmental@amerytel.net.

PREVENT INVASIVE SPECIES

Before you leave a body of water:

- **Inspect** and remove aquatic plants, animals, and mud from boat, trailer and equipment before leaving the landing.
- **Drain** all water from boat, motor, bilge, live wells and bait buckets and other containers before leaving the water access.
- **Ice** your catch; don't leave the landing with live fish, bait, or fish eggs.
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash, not in the water or on land.
- **Rinse** your boat and equipment with hot or high pressure water OR dry your boat for 5 days before entering another lake or river.

It's the law...

Laws have been written and adopted to protect our water resources from invasive species.

State of Wisconsin: Section 30.715 WI Act 16 prohibits launching a boat or placing a boat or trailer in navigable waters if it has aquatic plants or zebra mussels attached.

Polk County Ordinance 10-08: prohibits launching or operating on a public roadway any boat, boat trailer, or hunting, trapping, fishing, or boating equipment, including canoes, lines, anchors, nets, decoys, and waders if aquatic plants or invasive animals are present.