



PINE VIEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE
BIG PINE LAKES ASSOCIATION

February 2017

P.O. Box 190 Finlayson, MN 55735
<http://minnesotawaters.org/bigpinelakes/>

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(Years of service noted in parenthesis)

BPLA Committee Leaders

Boat Parade:

North lake - Lisa Drake

South lake - Rick Meier

Fireworks: Jim Stevenson

Logowear: Roger Olson

Membership: John Mueller

Merchant Directory: Roger Olson

Newsletter: John Mueller

Picnic: Ken & Ardie Johnson

Projects / Road Cleanup:

Roger Olson

Volunteer Committee:

Don Fornell

Water Quality: Dwight Benoy

Fish Habitat: Dave

Schinkoeth

Website: Cathy Stevenson

Chairman's Column

Jim Stevenson

Let me begin by giving a big thank you to **John Mueller**, the outgoing chair of the Big Pine Lakes Association. Besides serving as our chair the past year, John has also been our membership chair for several years, the publisher of the Pine Views Newsletter, and has also served as the treasurer. John has served the maximum of 3 two year terms on the board and the bylaws require that he leaves the board but we have not seen the last of him. He has agreed to continue to publish this newsletter as well as provide membership support. Following John in this role is a huge task. Thank you John.

Also leaving the board is **Greg Tavernier** whose schedule made it difficult for him to seek another term on the board. We offer a big Thank-you to you Greg for your commitment to the board.

At the September membership meeting, Jeff Lindgren was elected to a second two year term on the board representing Big Pine Lake and Roger Olson and I were elected to a second two year term representing Pine Lake. This left two open board positions to represent Big Pine Lake and **Greg Sorensen** was elected to fill one of those spots. With no other nominations at the membership meeting, the remaining spot was filled at a later date when the board of directors voted to have **Rich Helm** return after being off the board for a few years.

Welcome Greg and Rich.

2016 has turned out to be a memorable year for most of us on the Big Pine Lakes. The July 11th rains raised the lake by nearly four feet causing a lot of work for a lot of people. People I talked to around the lake said they have never seen the lake so high in all the years they have been up there. Your Association also accomplished a lot of things in 2016. You may have noticed that the dam at the end of the north lake has been repaired and the lake levels should remain at a more "normal" level.

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Calendar of Events

May 20th, Roadside Cleanup - meet at 9am at the south lake Public Landing. Snacks and beverages will be available.

May 27th, Membership Meeting at the Finlayson Community Center- social time with donuts and coffee starts at 9:15am, meeting starts at 10am.



PINE VIEWS

2016 Volunteer Project Day

Don Fornell (320-233-7604 or 651-303-2729)

Last fall we combined our roadside pick-up, and project day volunteers into 3 groups. One group focused on the roadside cleanup, a second group on removing the beaver debris from the dam on the north lake and a third group worked on cleaning up Strawberry Creek from damage done by the heavy summer rains.

The 6 volunteers for the roadside pick-up gathered quite an assortment of discarded bottles, cans, building materials, a trailer tire and rim and a couple fast food bags. They found nothing that couldn't have been placed in our daily waste container. Their request, "Please think twice before tossing things out the window, we can use our time and energy to do more positive things around the lakes."

Four volunteers dismantled the dam on the north lake built by the local beavers, bundling and loading the sticks on a trailer. They then transferred the bundled sticks to the group working on repairing the damage to the Strawberry Creek channel.

The third team working on the Strawberry Creek channel was repairing damage caused by the 8-12 inches of rain from July.

The huge amount of rain from the summer deluge had washed out the banks and swamp brush along the channel, disrupting and changing the direction of the creek/lake entrance. By repositioning the dislodged brush and using the bundles of recycled beaver dam materials from the north end dam, the team was able to reestablish a more normal flow for the water. This will allow the walleyes, northern pike and suckers to travel up Strawberry Creek and spawn again in the spring.

By the end of the day we had three project teams that were working together at Strawberry Creek to complete the task. The day ended on a very positive note.

This spring we have plans after the spawning is completed to work on more of the creek from the winter run off.

A special thanks to Don and Pat Makala for allowing access to Strawberry Creek, to Ron Redding for the use of his Jeep and winch and to all the volunteers that helped make Pine Lakes a little bit better with people working together. Hope we see you at the next project days of 2017.

Also thanks to Ray Holloway for his assistance and the use of his tractor to pull out the dock at the picnic area.

Membership Committee

John Mueller

This past year BPLA enjoyed a great year with over 200 participating members. In 2016 our members donated over \$17,000 through membership fees and donations throughout the year. Over \$1900 was directly earmarked for donation to the Food Shelf, which the BPLA forwarded to the Sandstone Food Shelf, managed by Family Pathways, to help needy families in the area. Additional funds were allocated to support water quality improvement projects around the lake, our annual July 4th fireworks and other Association activities. In 2017 we will be hosting the July 4th fireworks display on Saturday, July 1st to allow all our weekend vacationers to enjoy the show. Please plan your holiday travel accordingly.

This year's membership forms are included with the mailing of our early season newsletter which is sent to all current BPLA members and other families enjoying the lakes. In 2017 we are collecting member's telephone numbers to include in our directory, so please record yours on your submission if you wish.

Please encourage your neighbors, families and frequent lake guests to also support the BPLA so that we can continue to enjoy the activities around the lake and invest in its future.

For additional information regarding BPLA, check us out on our website at:

www.minnesotawaters.org/bigpinelakes/

Thank you for your continued support and confidence in BPLA!



February 2017

You can help improve our lakes by establishing a buffer zone

By: Ron Redding

You can help improve our lakes by establishing a buffer zone. Home and cabin owners located in Aitkin County have been working with Shelley Larson of Hayland Woods to create buffer zones of deep rooted native vegetation to protect shorelines from the erosion caused by waves and boat traffic. The buffer zones also provide habitat for fish, other aquatic wildlife as well as birds and butterflies. In addition to the protection provided to the shore, the buffer zone serves another important purpose by filtering the runoff from our yards that find their way into our lakes. This is important for the continued improvement of the water quality that we have seen over the last few years.

Shelley assists by designing a planting plan based on your input and coordinates the project with the Aitkin County Soil and Water Conservation District. Non-native plants are eradicated and a buffer zone is established in which plants native to Minnesota are planted.

You may be responsible for up to 25% of the cost for the prep work and plants, but if you want to reduce that cost you can provide resources to assist with the preparation, planting and follow-up maintenance. Many people have reduced their out of pocket expense to zero.

A resource has now been added in Pine County that will be able to assist with buffer zone projects coordinated through the Pine County Soil and Water Conservation District. This will allow us to make buffer zone improvements on both lakes regardless of the County you are in.

If you would like more information or would like to participate in the buffer zone project you can contact your Soil and Water Department or one of the BPLA board members.



Chairman's Column *(Continued)*

Jim Stevenson

Much work has gone into removing beavers from Strawberry Creek to preserve the spawning areas. We continue to work with the DNR to determine if we can create perch habitat areas around the lakes which would help our walleye population to grow as they should be. In addition to this we were able to secure grant money for several property owners who created buffer zones on their properties. And yes, we also had some fun.

A special "Thanks!" goes out to **Ken and Ardie Johnson** for hosting our annual picnic last July.

When we purchased our property 8 years ago we did not know anyone up here. We immediately attended the May membership meeting that year and soon we were volunteering for some of the Saturday project days. We have met so many great people being involved in BPLA and sometimes we feel more connected to our friends at the lake than we do with our neighbors in our home town. If you have neighbors or know of anyone else around the lake that is not a part of this wonderful organization please consider inviting them to come to our May membership meeting with you.

Here's wishing all of you a safe a fun 2017 season at the lake.

Jim Stevenson

Walleye Stocking Update

Dave Schinkoeth



Thank to support from the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibway last Fall the lakes were stocked with 10,000 Walleye fingerlings in the South lake and 15,000 in the North lake. Leslie George, MN DNR Fisheries for our area shared the following update: "We are well aware of this assistance from the Mille Lacs Band in our fall Walleye fingerling stocking efforts. In short, the state *really* struggled to produce enough Walleye fingerlings this fall to meet the statewide stocking quotas. The private sector also struggled to meet their contracted goals. The Mille Lacs Band had a very successful first year of attempting to raise fish and surprisingly had surplus available once they drained their rearing ponds. The Band ideally wanted to help by stocking them in lakes within the 1837 treaty area – which most of the Hinckley Fisheries Area falls within. I (amongst other Area Managers) were pleased to work with Carl Klimah, Mille Lacs Band fisheries biologist, to obtain and complete the necessary paperwork (fish health certification, stocking and transport permits) so they could assist us. The ML Band stocked the entire fall fingerling quota for South Pine this year and was also able to help us w/ a few additional fish to help finish off Big Pine's quota. There is a decent chance that the Pine Lakes may have not received their fall fingerling quota w/o this generous, cooperative effort.

Ice Out Contest Rules

(Win \$25 or a BPLA sweatshirt)

Our annual "Ice Out" contest for 2017 starts officially with the beginning of our annual membership drive. Members who submit their membership forms prior to March 31 are eligible to participate in the contest. Each member who submits their 2017 membership form is allowed one guess with payment of their annual BPLA dues with an extra guess provided to those who donate to the Fireworks fund. In the event that ice goes out prior to March 31, only submissions postmarked prior to that official Ice Out date will be considered. The ice out date is determined by BPLA when the ice is completely out on both the North and the South Lake. If more than one member submits the correct Ice out date a drawing will be held at our May Membership meeting.

Local Businesses

Please patronize the businesses
that support the BPLA!
They are important to our success!

A&M Pumps	320-676-3386
Aitkin County Sheriff	218-927-7435
American Septic	320-384-7300
Bjorklund & Sons Construction	320-245-2879
Chris' Food Center	320-245-2229
D&E Heating/AC	320-384-0066
Double W Tree Service	320-279-1472
East Central Energy	800-254-7944
Federated Co-ops	320-245-5576
Finlayson Ag & Hardware	320-233-7372
Geise Bed & Breakfast	888-220-0234
Hayland Woods Native Nursery	320-983-2584
John Andreason Heating	320-233-6068
Lake State Federal Credit Union	320-245-5251
Lampert Lumber	320-245-2276
LaRose Greenhouse & Nursery	320-233-7455
Man's Mowing	320-630-5336
Maple Run Orchard	320-279-1306
Marce Hemming Real Estate	651-387-3874
Matt's Sanitation	320-384-7137
MJC Equipment, Inc	320-245-5127
Moose Lake Implement & Sport	218-485-4486
Mora Marine	320-679-1262
MPJ Enterprises	320-245-5127
Northview Bank	320-233-7575
Paul's Portables	320-245-6802
Peterson's New & Used	320-233-6429
Pine County Sheriff	320-629-8380
Pine Lake Mini Storage	320-233-6394
Purple Pumper	320-384-0655
Rapit Printing	651-633-4600
Sandee's Salon	320-233-6192
Sandstone Ace Hardware	320-245-2235
Schoenrock Construction	320-233-6192
Septic Check	320-983-2447
Town & Country Insurance	320-233-6684