

Big Sugar Bush Notes

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Food for Thought

by Nancy Lacina

Welcome to landowners on our pristine, fragile lake. The lake community here recognizes how lucky we are to be joint caretakers of a healthy water environment. To maintain this beauty we count on each other's mutual diligence. Our lake community takes the long view of water quality, shorelines, and water recreation.

We share caretaker tips and have discovered how lake shape and size do restrict recreational choices. Sounds and wake travels easily impacting each of us. To date this lake has not needed formal boat/watercraft restrictions beyond state laws. But many lakes have taken formal steps to protect their unique setting. Invasive species and powerful water toys now are challenging the previously remote flavor of Big Sugar Bush life. How will our community respond?

Photo by George Wallman



Big Sugar Bush Lake Association Purpose:

The Association shall promote, protect and maintain the environmental and recreational value of Big Sugar Bush Lake area.

The Association shall work in conjunction with Federal, State and Local Associations, Public and Private to maintain the quality of our lake.

We all have a shared responsibility to protect our lakes, natural areas and wildlife habitat: to use only what we need, make smarter choices, and pass onto future generations the beauty, wildlife, water and natural resources we have today. – Author Unknown



A Huge Thank You to Ron and Jan Jenson

Neighbors from Big Sugar Bush and the surrounding community gathered to thank Ron and Jan Jenson on May at the Richwood Winery as they move back to the Moorhead community. Their son Mark and Mindy Jenson transition to the lake home. The Jenson's are examples of the fact that lake life is not just about R & R but, contributing to the community, as well.

Ron was the driving force behind the addition of the Discovery Center at Tamarac Refuge. This is an education building that focuses on programming that expands opportunities for hundreds of school children to participate in environmental learning activities in all seasons of the year, rain or shine. He volunteered in many ways over the years at Tamarac speaking at service organizations, presiding over the Friends of Tamarac board, and helping with school groups.

He also served on the township board and initiated the idea of creating a new town hall, which is now in process. He put graveling township roads on a schedule.

We continue to smile when we think of the jokes he played on neighbors hanging "Malcolm", a giant masked man in various homes to welcome people home when returning from vacations. Of course, a lot of thought went into what return jokes would be played on him.

Jan always had a bright smile and a good story as she baked multiple dozens of cookies for the various events. She kept her freezer filled with apple pies for just the right thing to bring to neighborhood gatherings. We aren't saying good-bye, as we hope to continue to see much of both of them. It is a good time to say a HUGE THANK YOU. Welcome to Mark and Mindi Jenson family.

**Volunteers from Big Sugar Bush
Help build the new town hall**

**Larry Michelson-Chief planner,
contractor, and builder**



Category	Survey Sites	Shoreland Score (33)	Shoreline Score (33)	Aquatic Score (33)	Mean Score Std Error	Mean Score (100)
Lakewide	107	32.2	27.0	27.2	1.0	86.4
Undeveloped Total	81	33.0	27.3	28.7	0.6	89.0
Undeveloped Nonwetland	75	33.0	27.3	28.9	0.6	89.2
Undeveloped Wetland	6	33.3	26.7	26.7	0.0	86.7
Developed Total	26	29.7	26.2	22.4	3.3	78.3
Agricultural	1	6.7	26.7	26.7	0.0	60.0
Several Single-Family Residential Lots	2	23.3	16.7	16.7	30.0	56.7
Single-Family Residential	23	31.2	27.0	22.8	2.8	80.9



Score the Shore

Score the shore has been redone by DNR on Big Sugar Bush. A couple of years ago score the shore was completed by an NDSU graduate student and property owners were sent individual results which were confidential to each land owner. The intent was to promote a natural shoreline. The DNR completed this process in Aug. 2017, and sent us overall results. The more natural shoreline receives the highest rating (closest to 100). Shoreline with a lawn that runs to the lake with no buffer zone has the lowest rating. If you don't have a buffer zone, you might consider adding one.

Mn DMR Fisheries ISBI program staff conducted an assessment of lakeshore habitat on Big Sugar Bush Lake on Aug. 14, 2017, following the Score the Shore survey protocols. The assessment consisted of 107 survey sites evenly spaced 200 meters around the lake. Assessments were made in three habitat zones. Shoreline Zone (the shore-water interface to the top of the natural bank), Shoreland Zone (land-ward from shoreline to development structure or 100 ft.), and Aquatic Zone (lake-ward 50 ft. of shoreline). The average lake-wide habitat score was 86.4 (+/- 1.0) out of 100 possible. Approximately 24 % of the sites were developed with a mean score of 78.3 (+/-3/3), while undeveloped sites had a mean score of 89.0 (+/- 0.6).

From Runoff to Ruin: The Undoing of Minnesota's Lakes

excerpts taken from article written by Ron Waiy and Steve Berg

We Minnesotans are in deep denial about the critical condition of our lakes and the culpability we share. We are loving our lakes to death. It's not the crush of shoreline development by itself that's killing them, it's the reckless way in which development has been allowed to proceed. Over the last half-century, quaint lakeside cabins have been transformed, by the thousands, into mega homes with large fertilized lawns running to the water's edge.

"It's death by a thousand cuts," said Peter Sorensen, a fisheries expert at the University of Mn. and one of a number of scientists who consider the damage irreversible, given the added realities of a warming climate and a stiff political resistance to land-use changes needed to restore central Mn's lakes.

The best we can hope for, then is to preserve the still relatively pristine tier of forest-encircled northern lakes. The aim shouldn't be to inhibit future development but to change development's character in ways that protect lakes and their surrounding watersheds.

If 75% of lakeshore remains mainly forested, the chance of maintaining lake quality is good, said Peter Jacobson of the state's Department of Natural Resources. But when natural cover falls below 60%, lakes begin to deteriorate. Here's what happens: Runoff from farm fields and pavement creates a nutrient overload in nearby lakes. The process accelerates when natural buffers are replaced by lawns and riprap barriers at the water's edge. When air temperatures rise in the spring, the upper layer of lake water heats up, causing algae blooms that decay and consume oxygen that otherwise sustains fish and their habitat. Climate change compounds the problem by keeping the water warmer for longer periods.

The focus should shift to keeping clean lakes clean, insists Bill Patnaude, Beltrami County's environmental services director. There's no mystery about what's needed: larger setbacks for new lakeside homes, natural buffers between lakes and yards, a prohibition against nitrogen fertilizers, frequent inspections of septic systems, and incentives for traditional town design that limits the size of paved parking lots while encouraging native plants, rain gardens, maximum tree coverage and permeable pavers. In short, what's required is a built environment that harmonizes with nature rather than defying it.

Concordia College Executive Summary

This report provides empirical data on who Mn lake associations are, the scope of the lake conservation activities that they engage in, the major concerns they have, and the main hurdles they face. Survey methodology was used to gather data from 250 respondents representing 186 different lake associations in MN. Methods of analysis included descriptive, frequencies and correlations.

Examination of descriptive statistics and frequencies revealed the following:

*Most Mn lake associations were formed in the 1960's and 70's. The main reason for forming a lake association is the preservation/protection of the lake. Specifically, the top goals most lake associations have are to control aquatic invasive species in the lake and to improve the quality of the lake water.

*Most lake associations in our sample report that their members are motivated to reach the lake association's goals and welcome membership by anyone interested in the welfare of the lake, not just owners of lake properties.

*Most lake associations have 100-400 members and 10 or more board members. Even though about half of lake association board members have expertise in specific lake conservation areas such as fisheries and /or AIS only about 5% of them are able to contribute to legislation affecting the lake. Collectively the 599 + lake associations in MN contribute about 1.2 million volunteer hours annually to lake conservation activities, including AIS inspection, attendance of meetings, water quality testing, and community education/outreach activities.

*The top 3 concerns of lake associations in MN are AIS, overall water quality, and runoff control

*Most respondents agree or strongly agree that their associations face hurdles in becoming more engaged in lake conservation activities.

The top 3 challenges that Mn lake associations face as they work on achieving their goals are: Inadequate member participation (i.e. the needs far exceed the available human capital, not being heard/taken seriously by the DNR, and the aging population of lake property owners.

*Most respondents do not agree that their lake associations are authentically included in the lake planning process.

*Most respondents do not feel that their lake associations have real authority over the lake.



The Glory of a New Day

A cool breeze brushes my face as I sit in the quietness of a new day
Relaxing on my deck I enjoy my feathered friends more than I can say
The yellow finches dance back and forth from feeder to feeder-tree to tree
Serenading with joy, flashing their gold for me to see
The nutcrackers are just hungry to feed
cocking their heads up and down to pick the seed
The delicate hummingbirds flit around the red juice
Stopping to sip whenever they choose
On a tree stump below then rests the graceful blue heron
Nodding her approval at the beauty around
Nine turtles are lined up on a log in the pond
Fast asleep shining silver in the sun
A bald eagle floats across the heaven above
Bringing food for its young and declaring love
Just a moment on the deck in the morning hour
As I thank God for His glory and His awesome power

Written by Idelle Bagney

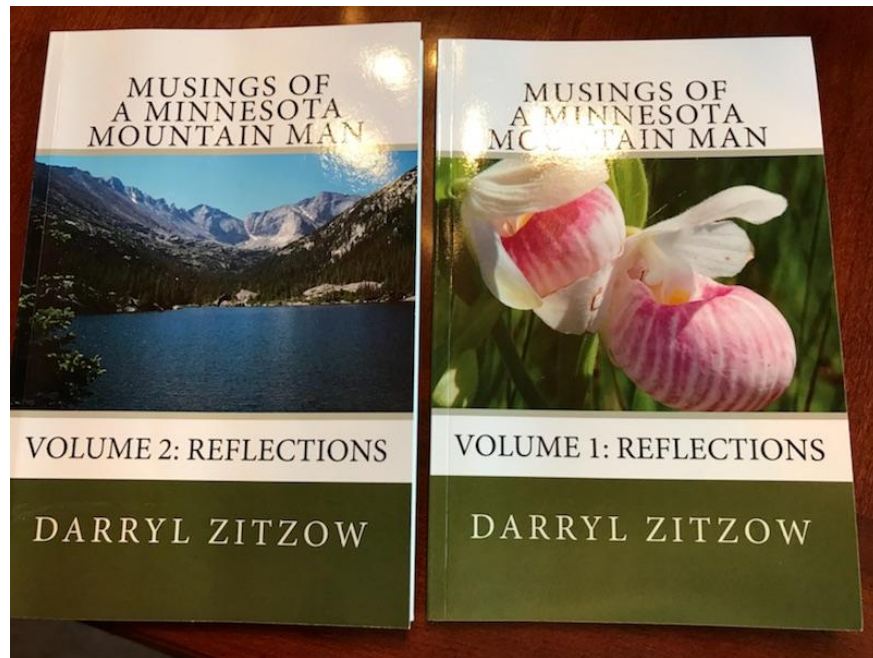
Idelle lived on Big Sugarbush for years and passed away May 6, 2016.

Her greatest joy was living on Big Sugar Bush Lake where she was close to her daughter Penny, nieces, nephews and extended family. She especially enjoyed her evening pontoon rides, which were always a mini family reunion.

Worth Noting...

Facebook page: Big Sugar Lake Association

If you are on Facebook, please like us and let your families know we have a Facebook page. We have lots of great photographers on BSB. Send your photos and BSB updates to marykohlhepp@gmail.com or post to Facebook.



Darryl Zitzow, Big Sugar Bush neighbor's books can be purchased on Amazon.





John Boots leads a Solstice Toast

Big Sugar Bush Lake Association Board Members

With the change to one meeting per year, terms ending in 2018 will extend through the spring meeting when the next election will take place (as voted by the board of directors.)

President: Chuck Becker 2015-2018

VP: Ken Mattson 2016-2019

Treasurer Kay Lommen 2017-2020

Secretary: Kent Anderson 2016-2019

Steve Odegaard 2015-2018

Larry Michelson 2015-2018

Mary Kohlhepp 2016-2019

Bob Bachman 2017-2020

Johanna Christenson 2017-2020

Webmaster: Ross Collins

Web content: Nancy Nornes Olson

Newsletter editor: Fran Mattson

Big Sugar Bush Website: bigsugarbush.net

