

BASS LAKE RIPPLES

(NAUTICAL & NICE NEWS - Greater Bass Lake Protection & Rehabilitation District)

VOLUME 13, NO. 1

SPRING 2010

LAKE DISTRICT OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN..... Jerry Jacobus
VICE-CHAIRMAN..... Roger Sell
SEC. TREAS. Michelle Arlen
LANGLADE Co. Rep. Tom Schultz
UPHAM REP..... Larry Anderson

BASSLAKE RIPPLES CO-EDITORS

DICK & CAROL HORNECK
(715) 275-4359

SPRING INTO THE SEASON

After an uncharacteristically beautiful March, April and May swung by with some less than beautiful Wisconsin surprises. It came to a peak with the trees down, power outage winter storm of early May. Those of us who escape Wisconsin winters in warmer climates tried to look on it as our "Welcome Back to Wisconsin!" event.

It turned out to be an unusual winter no matter where you spent it this year. Just as people were discussing the various curves thrown us in the dry month of May, along came one of the most beautiful holiday weekends in recent memory. Memorial Day weekend turned out to be glorious, and led us into the month of June where we have now experienced some near record rainfalls and wonderful spring weather.

Our dry summer and fall found less boats in their usual locations as the season ended, with more people taking them off of the water earlier, some with great difficulty. The problem has not gone away, but rather

intensified; take a ride around the lake (if you are able) and see how many docks have had to be started farther out into the lake. And, sadly, many people have not even put their docks or boatlifts into the water.

To be sure, we need to be very careful on the lake this year. Watch the buoys and markers, but more than that, be very careful to be aware of varying levels as you go.

LAKE WATER SPRINKLING?

While we do not have water use regulations in effect at this time, we strongly advise **NO LAWN SPRINKLING** this summer!

ANNUAL LAKE MEETING

The 2010 annual meeting of the Greater Bass Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District will be held at the Upham Town Hall at 2:00 P.M. on Saturday, July 10th.

AGENDA

- *Call to Order – Introduce Lake Board Commissioners & Committee Chairmen
- *Approve 2009 Annual Meeting Minutes
- *Invasive Species Report
- *Fisheries Update
- *Water Quality Report
- *Summit Lake Hearing - Permit Request
- *Legal Expenses – Past yr. – Tax Increase?
- *2010 Budget Approval
- *Consider Water Use Regulation
- *Boat Landing Improvement
- *Election of new Commissioner
- *Defibrillator Cost – Re-certification
- *Culvert Update
- *New Business
- *Adjourn

D.N.R. LAKE HEARING

If you are reading this issue of the Bass Lake Ripples, you probably know about the DNR Hearing scheduled on June 18th to gather more information from residents before ruling on the fate of the disputed outlet between Summit and Greater Bass Lake. Our letter went out to lake district residents in April, pleading for support in the form of letters to the DNR Water Management Specialist Dan Houston. Many of us felt it was ludicrous that we would even need to ask for a hearing with the DNR to try to block a move such as the Summit Lake Association (for Brad Munger) was proposing, to add fill and risk reducing the flow of water into Bass, Water Power, Kettle, and Deep Woods Lakes even more. **Common sense would seem to dictate that no organization charged with the protection of waters would even consider permitting any such action to a body of water.** But as we all have learned, there are certain procedures in place that must be followed in cases like this, so the letter went out. Your editors and commissioners were pleased to learn that **more than 90 of you wrote letters in response.** There was some confusion over due dates that changed just as the letters went out, but many of you cared enough to call and check, and then went on not only to write your own letter, but to help spread the word to others.

Feelings vary about the actions of the individuals who have become known as the “Bass Lake Four”, who took it upon themselves over two years ago to try to restore a freer flow of water into Bass Lake by removing stones and debris from the restricted channel. You hear everything from praise to disgust expressed when people talk about the event that triggered this latest skirmish in the battle over lake levels that has gone on for years in this area.

Whatever your individual feelings about that may be, the important thing now is for people to come to the realization that we **need to work together** to try to have the original condition of that waterway be restored, and let Nature take its course when it comes to determining the lake levels.

The hearing at Upham Town Hall was very well attended, and for the most part remained quite calm with civil attitudes prevailing. It was admittedly difficult at one point when we were asked to muster up sympathy for Summit Lake, when residents complained of their slight drop in water level, when you were sitting in a room with residents of Deep Woods, who have all but lost their entire lake. Several of their residents did a **remarkable job of not only portraying the devastation to their lake, but a wonderful grasp of the historical changes that have brought us to this point.** They made the point quite eloquently that if we are to honor Summit Lake residents’ wishes to restore the area to its previous condition, it is **important that we go back further in time to when the channel was much bigger and freer flowing.** We are in the midst of a major drought affecting Wisconsin’s lakes in this region, an issue that some forget when accusing each other of meddling.

Special thanks to all those who worked so hard to gather facts, write timelines and letters, and get the word out, and to those who responded with letters, calls, meeting attendance, and coming and/or speaking at the DNR hearing. We are told a decision could be rendered within 30 days; there is also an appeals process. It is important that we stay informed, behave responsibly, and be ready to do what is asked of us should it be necessary to carry this further for the benefit of all of our lakes.

4TH OF JULY

Our fireworks fund Chairman, Gail Kestly, has delivered collection packets to the volunteers who are out there hoping to **gather generous donations** from all of you for continuing the **Bass Lake tradition of beautiful fireworks shows.**

The **Annual Boat Parade** will be a bit of a challenge this year, with lake levels so low. Some people may not be able to join in, but hopefully that means a good big audience on the shore for those who are able to parade. We will need to proceed with caution and keep a safe distance out from shore in order to find deep enough water to travel safely. We hope to see many of you out there for the **parade on SUNDAY, JULY 4TH at 4:00 P.M.**

Watch the amazing fireworks show beginning at DUSK from the island, also on SUNDAY, JULY 4TH.

MORE LOONS?

As we moved through the spring season we kept trying to gather more information on what people on the lake were seeing regarding the return of our Loons. **Here's what we have learned.....**

Our resident pair may well have returned to our lake, but they apparently have not nested in the place they used the last several years. We feel that is probably because the small "island" they chose allowed their nest to be close to the water; now that area out of the water is huge and would leave them too vulnerable on a larger span of land they can't comfortably navigate. They tend to relocate when conditions aren't as good as they feel they need for safety and success.

At any rate, people have been seeing Loons out and about on the main body of our lake in groups as large as four and five,

swimming in formation in what has been described as an amazing sight. We hope to see that one of these days for ourselves, as you don't know how long we might have them here. They may have relocated temporarily because of lack of water on their usual lake home; we don't know.

The happiest news came recently when we heard that one pair has apparently nested somewhere in the farthest back bay. **Two babies have been observed** with one or both parents. We all look forward to hopefully seeing them as they venture further out into the rest of the lake area as they grow up through the summer. Please continue to be careful as you journey around the lake; **enjoy the sight of these magnificent creatures from a respectful distance.** The rewards are great as we see and hear them.

GOLF CARTS

Most of us know that **golf carts are now legally allowed to travel on the roads to and from the golf course, within a mile of the course.** Please remember, however, that this was passed for the convenience of those golfers living close enough to use their carts **coming and going for playing golf!**

We continue to have some problems with young people out driving the golf carts for fun on the roads. **The law requires drivers of the carts to be 16 yrs. old and carry a valid driver's license.** Violators are subject to **severe penalties, including possible delay of obtaining driver's licenses** when they do come of age. The Sheriff's Department strongly encourages you to monitor young people so they do not engage in this dangerous behavior. If you do see it happening, observe the occupants and cart carefully, please call to report it, and if possible, note where they live or the cart returns to, etc.

D.N.R. FISHERIES REPORT

Hot off the press and below are the catch numbers from our survey this spring. Keep in mind the nets were set in locations to try and catch muskellunge. I have not crunched the numbers yet to see what the muskellunge population works out to yet, but my instincts tell me it is a pretty good population. Most of the musky were between 30 and 40 inches in length.


We caught 23 walleye. Most were from 20-27 inches. One was 29.5" long! One was 10.5 inches long and likely came down from Summit Lake.

The northern pike look really good. Most were from 20-27 inches long. A couple were longer than 35 inches!

Largemouth bass are reproducing. Most were from 7-15 inches long. A couple were close to 18 inches.

Bluegill are the most numerous pan fish, followed by black crappie. Some are decent size but the **pan fish populations in general would benefit from more predation by bass or harvest from anglers.** We hope the bass regulation helps build up bass numbers so that they can thin out the small pan fish and allow those left over to have more food and grow faster. It appears that things are improving in that regard but it will still take some time. **Anglers are encouraged to release all bass, as that will only help this process.**

Let me know if you have any questions.
Good fishing, Dave

 *Dave Seibel*

Fisheries Biologist - Langlade & Lincoln Counties
Bureau of Fisheries Management
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

The next training class on the **Automatic Electronic Defibrillator** will be held at the **Bass Lake Clubhouse on Friday, July 16th, from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon.** We are looking for more people to become familiar with this equipment and learn how to use it most effectively. **Please consider joining them** for this session, either as a first timer or for re-certification.

LAKE SAFETY

Whether you prefer sailing, kayaking, canoeing, pontoon boating, water skiing, riding a personal watercraft, fishing, or just puttering around out on the lake in a rowboat with or without a motor, Bass Lake offers wonderful opportunities for all. The trick to all of us enjoying any of these is to **show consideration and respect for the other users.** Brush up on your Boating Safety Laws and **be sure children, grandchildren and guests are aware of safe and legal operating procedures.**

One of our more frequent problem areas tends to involve **personal watercraft not keeping the required distances** from other crafts, piers, and shore. One **specific law highlight** here: When towing an inflatable or skier behind a personal watercraft, it must be able to seat at least two people, and you must have a second person aboard the personal watercraft for "spotting", just as we are required to do in a boat. **Slow-no-wake travel is required for all boats and water crafts between the main lake body and bays,** and with this season's low water levels that becomes more important than ever. If we all use **common sense and respect** others, in addition to **following the laws,** we can **have a safe and happy summer!**