

The Mission Bell

JULY 2019

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Association
Annual
Meeting Notes

Facts you
should know

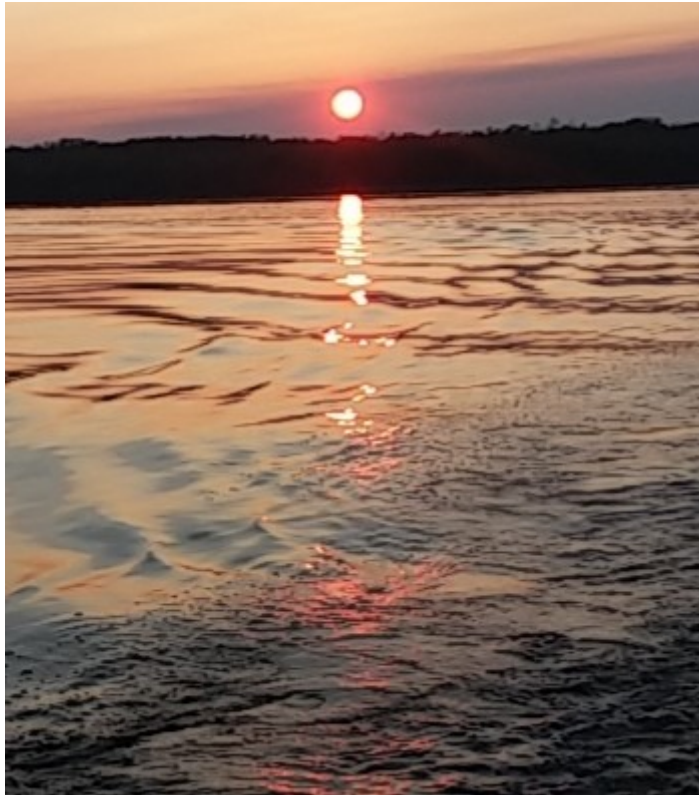
Keeping the
lakes clean

Association
Board
Members

Visit our website at

www.missionlakesassociation.org

Please use the enclosed envelope to make a donation to Mission Lakes Association (a 501c3 organization). We suggest adopting a portion of an acre (or more if you can) at \$300 or whatever you are able to contribute. Membership to the Mission Lakes Association is \$20 annually.



Southerly drifting smoke from Canadian fires enhances an already beautiful sunset on Lower Mission. (Photo submitted by Barb Woese)

Every year, we tend to breathe a little sigh of relief when green leaves begin to unfurl, hostas and tulips poke up through the soil, and we don't have to bundle up in winter coats to get the morning paper at the road. It seemed that this spring had a more difficult time than ever to gain ground against late snows and unrelenting cold. I know I watched flakes swirl on April 11, and I have, on good authority, that ice out happened on April 21. That's not so late, but the cold and wet lingered throughout May. Now, the annual warming process brings the same anticipation of warmth and piqued impatience surrounding pushing the docks, lifts and boats out into the lake and getting those flowering plants in our pots and gardens. As I write this, it seems that summer has arrived again, and I welcome it. ~ Rebecca Timmins

Annual Meeting notes

The Mission Lakes Association Board hosted its annual meeting at the township hall on May 25. This is always open to everyone who lives and uses Upper and Lower Mission Lakes, and this year's meeting was well attended.

Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates was our guest speaker. Jeff discussed with us the many roles on a grass roots level we all can play in keeping our lakes healthy for future generations and property values. He explained what his organization does and how we can benefit from his platform to influence decision makers at the state level. The board had asked him to cover information about Lake Improvement Districts (LID). According to the Crow Wing County website, an LID is a taxing district formed around an area, such as a lake, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes. It is a local unit of government established by resolution of appropriate county boards and/or city governing bodies, or by the commissioner, for the implementation of defined lake management projects and for the assessment of the costs. If an LID is established everyone contributes, and everyone benefits.

The overall goal of establishment of the LID program is to preserve and protect the lakes of the state and to increase and enhance the use and enjoyment of the lakes. With an LID, aquatic invasive species (AIS) could be treated with greater success. LIDs provide a shift in authority which increases power and options that we don't have as an association. An LID would also assure the plan is 100% funded by all. The only projects that can be funded are set up in the charter, so the use of funds is very transparent.

Annual Meeting notes continued on next page



This *Arisaema triphyllum*, commonly known as jack-in-the-pulpit, is found across Minnesota. The hood of the flower, known technically as a spathe (pulpit), contains a long, stem-like growth called the spadix (Jack), which is where the flower's reproductive parts are found. It's from this flower structure that the plant gets its common name, Jack-in-the-pulpit. (Photo submitted by Palma Zoia.)

Visit our website at www.missionlakesassociation.org

Annual Meeting notes *(continued from first page)*

To establish an LID, 60% +1 of property owners must approve the plan to create a taxing authority. LIDs also must be renewed every 5 years. There are currently 44 LIDs in Minnesota, and certainly more will be established with over 1200 lakes statewide infected with AIS. The Mission Lakes Association (MLA) is one among 517 lake associations in Minnesota.

Less than half of 1% of MN lakeshore owners are engaged on a grass roots level. During the annual meeting, consensus was found in the idea that the MLA needs to work on civic infrastructure. We discussed involving future generations, i.e. school events, fundraising and getting youth, the community and possibly corporate support.

MLA board members Gary Rhode and Roger Mack attended training and are certified to do AIS inspections at the public landings. This training is open to all who are interested. We are not scheduled for any assistance from the DNR for the inspections on Mission Lakes. Please consider volunteering to inspect at one of the landings this summer.

The lake quality is stable. The average high level is 1180.6 and we are now 1" below the ordinary high level. Recent secchi readings indicate the lake water is clear to 15' on Upper Mission and 25' on Lower Mission. Testing for zebra veligers detect none are present, so far.

Federally protected cormorants have been a problem on nearby lakes and the Mission Lakes as well. Just one can eat up to a pound of fish each day, and hundreds of them can negatively affect fish populations in our area. Property owners on Pelican Lake have secured permits to eliminate large numbers of cormorants. The MLA has contributed to the cost of this exercise in the past year and has done so this year as well.

Beavers have been a problem for the Mission Lakes as they continue to build dams at the spot where the creek flows out of Lower Mission. Their numbers are presently under control, and the creek is flowing freely.

VRBOs were discussed. Issues surrounding these are being explored by the Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance, of which we are a member.

Long-time board member, Ron Hedlund who will remain on the board, has stepped down as secretary, and Belinda Hedlund was elected to the secretary position. Four new board members were elected to first-time positions. They include: Palma Zoia, Gail Nixa, Maggie Aslakson, and Derek Aslakson.

Notable notes ~ from Nick Bernier, MLA President

In order to determine where and how to treat AIS each year, mapping the lakes and determining the location of AIS beds must be completed at a cost of \$250 per lake. For several years, Professional Lake Management (PLM) has done this mapping free of charge. PLM has also done the chemical treatment for AIS. PLM bids lowest for mapping. We have been very satisfied with PLM.



Eurasian watermilfoil

Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) costs approximately \$1150 per acre to treat. Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) costs about \$500 - \$1000 per acre, depending on the size of the weed bed. These rates are very competitive, and we have not found any company to treat for less. There are cheaper chemicals available, but they can cause harm to fish, and we do not use them. In 2018, we treated 6 acres of CLP on Lower Mission and 11.6 acres on Upper all for a cost \$11,640.

We identified two 10-acre CLP beds earlier this spring: one in the upper narrows channel and another on the west side of Lower Mission. We only had adequate funds to treat one of these beds, keeping in mind that we need reserves for EWM treatment later this summer. The channel bed was prioritized by the board because it is such a high traffic area.

Noted notes continued on next page

Notable notes continued from previous page

This CLP bed was treated on 5/23/2019 at a cost of a little less than \$7000. Several other small beds of CLP were identified, but we do not have the funds to treat them. There are currently no grants available for CLP treatment.

We are still eligible for up to \$4000 per lake for EWM treatment through the county, but we have to pay for the treatment first and then get reimbursed. How much EWM we will have is yet to be seen as it grows later in the spring/summer. In 2018, we treated 5.2 acres of EWM on Lower Mission and 16.7 acres on Upper Mission for a cost of \$25,337. We were unable to treat all of the EWM areas on the Upper lake due to financial constraints. It is the first year we have faced this problem.

So far, zebra mussels have not been detected in the Mission Lakes, but the Crow Wing County website lists risk factor for invasion of Zebra Mussels in Upper Mission is 22% likely to be infested in the next 5 Years.

Go to this link to the Crow Wing County website to learn more about AIS. <https://www.crowwing.us/1004/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-AIS>

Currently, we are mostly dependent on donations from lake association members. Operating costs are hard to project, and we need more reserve funds so we can be ready to treat when needed as treatment is always paid up front. We have seen about a 40% association membership among property owners. This does not provide enough funds for the board to be able to treat all the AIS that is affecting the lakes now. In the short-term, the board would like to see at least a 60% membership with a long-term goal of 100% and possibly creating an LID for the Mission Lakes, a scenario where everyone contributes, and everyone benefits.

A smaller group will continue working on reaching out to property owners who are not association members and to insure that all new owners are connected to the association with current communications and information.

Our board's common mission is to maintain our Mission Lakes to be swimmable, fishable, navigable, and beautiful in order to pass it on in good shape to our descendants. We invite all of you to join us in this effort.



Curly-leaf pondweed

Visiting boats need to clean up!

We are well into boating season, and lake residents and visitors must always keep the problem of Aquatic Invasive Species in mind when bringing boats onto either Upper or Lower Mission lakes. The lakes are already infected with curly-leaf pondweed and Eurasian watermilfoil. So far, the Mission Lakes have not experienced the invasion of the non-native zebra mussel.

If a boat has come from another lake, owners should ~

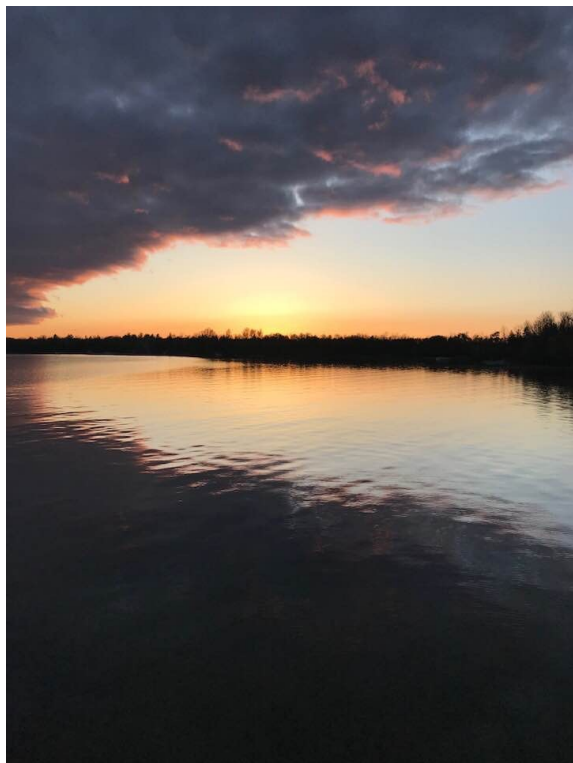
- ◇ Spray the boat with high-pressure water
- ◇ Rinse with very hot water, 120° for at least two minutes; or 140°F for at least 10 seconds. These water temperatures will kill zebra mussels and some other aquatic invasive species.
- ◇ Dry for at least five days

Boats coming from neighboring lakes that are infested with zebra mussels, must follow these steps and cannot launch into the Mission Lakes until they have been out of these lakes for 14-21 days.

Remember, it is against the law to transport a boat with the drain plug in.

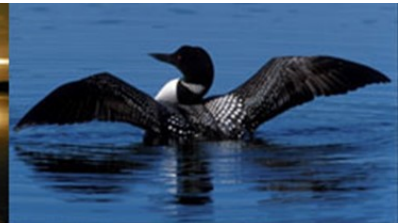
Please consider volunteering to inspect boats at the Mission Lakes landings during the summer.

<http://www.crowwing.us/DocumentCenter/View/14825/Preventing-Aquatic-Invasive-Species?bidId=>



**Nature's artistry on Upper Mission.
(Photo submitted by Gail Nixa)**

Mission Lakes Association
26285 County Road 19
Merrifield, MN, 56465



Mission Lakes Association Board

Nick Bernier, President
Roger Mack, Vice President
Belinda Hedlund, Secretary

218-765-3017
763-670-0957
612-296-8849

mnarrows@hotmail.com
knuckleheadcycle@yahoo.com
belinda.hedlund@
tubeandsolidtire.com

Cheryl Turcotte, Treasurer 218-765-4204

UPPER LAKE REPRESENTATIVES

Derek Aslakson
Maggie Aslakson
Ron Hedlund
Gail Nixa
Steve Scholtes
Jack Schubert
Palma Zoia

218-765-3258
507-261-4334
218-765-4052
320-249-1443
651-318-9634

daslakson@gmail.com
maggie.aslakson@gmail.com
rhedlund@brainerd.net
ganixa1@gmail.com
sas15147@brainerd.net
jsschubert@frontiernet.net
zoiapalma@gmail.com

LOWER LAKE REPRESENTATIVES

Gary Rohde
Rebecca Timmins
Barb Woese

218-765-3963
952-797-3383
218-765-3959

jpgrohde@brainerd.net
rrtimmins@hotmail.com
bwoese@hotmail.com