



CrowWingLARA.org

# Ripples

CROW WING COUNTY  
LAKES AND RIVERS ALLIANCE  
P.O. BOX 53, PEQUOT LAKES, MN 56472

June 2013

## In This Issue

Lake Association Preserves Water Quality

LARA Annual Meeting

LARA Membership Update

President's Message

Editor's Note

MPCA Studies

Get To Know Your Board Members

LARA Loses One Of Its Own

Introduction to Rain Gardens Class

## What One Lake Association Has Done To Monitor And Preserve Their Water Quality

By: Mike O'Brien,

Lower South Long Lake is located about nine miles south of Brainerd off of Highway 25 in Crow Wing County. It is three miles long and just under 1300 acres. Lake water quality monitoring has taken place since 1978. In the 1990s concern over green algae and the proliferation of weeds became the main focus of the lake association (Lower South Long Lake Improvement Association)

In 1999 members of the lake association attended the "Healthy Lakes Workshop" presented by the Initiative Foundation and created a written plan to address these

problems. In 2000 we received a grant to inspect the septic systems of properties located on the lake. Crow Wing County supplied low interest loans for those with failing septic systems. The testing was voluntary and most people around the lake agreed to have their septic systems inspected free of cost. Although there were a few failing systems most were functioning properly.

In 2003 we partnered with the DNR to create an *Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan*. Using this document created by all the stakeholders we were able educate landowners, assist with best practices and monitor those things that were contributing to the green algae and the proliferation of weeds.


*Curly leaf pondweed*, an aquatic invasive species became the main target of our efforts to improve water quality. In 2006 we created a **Lake Improvement District (LID)**.

This process allows property owners to create by petition a system where they agree to tax themselves an amount each year to combat AIS.

Ours was \$80 per owner per year. The money has been used to hire vendors to treat the curly leaf pondweed.



After five years of treatment our secchi readings have improved from seven feet to eleven feet. In the bay area located off Highway 25 and County Road 22 people are water skiing and boating where they once could not. We do not have the amount of green slime carpeting the lake that we used to experience once the curly leaf dies off in the summer.

Our lake association and LID work together to accomplish the goals set over the years. We continue to educate ourselves and our neighbors on the best practices to achieve improved water quality. We know we cannot get rid of the curly leaf pondweed – but we can manage it. By managing the AIS we can improve our water quality. Residents are becoming more conscious of the need for good water quality and lake stewardship. All of this is done through the efforts of volunteers. 



### Mark Your Calendar for the LARA Annual Meeting!

Location: Lake Edward Town Hall

Date: Wednesday, August 14

Time: 7-9 p.m.

# LARA Membership Update

by Ann Beaver

As of May 30, response to LARA's 2013 spring membership mailing has been very good. Twenty-five Crow Wing County lake associations have already renewed their membership or rejoined LARA after a short hiatus. If your association is not on the following list of 2013 paid members, we hope this article will serve as a useful reminder to send in your membership letter (with updates) and dues in the very near future.

Bass Lake Association  
Clamshell-Bertha Lakes Association  
Clark Lake Conservation Association  
Crow Wing Lake Association  
Cullen Lakes Association  
Fifty Lakes Property Owners Association  
Friends of Lower Hay Lake, Inc.  
Gull Chain of Lakes Association  
Horseshoe Lake Association  
Lake Edward Conservation Club  
Lake Ossawinamakee Property Owners Association  
Lougee Lake Property Owners Association  
Lower South Long Lake Improvement Association  
Mud Lake Association (personal membership)  
Pelican Lakes Conservation Club  
Pelican Lakes Association  
Platte Lake Property Owners Association  
Portage Crooked Lake Improvement Association  
Rabbit, Carlson, Clinker, Cuyuna Lake Association  
Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association  
Ross Stark Twin Lakes Association  
Serpent Lake Association  
Upper South Long Lake Improvement Association  
Whitefish Area Property Owners Association  
White Sand Lake Association

Last year's membership numbered 35. We hope to surpass that this year, since we already have two memberships from lake associations that didn't belong to LARA in 2012. 🐾

## A Note From the Editor

We hope you like the new look of our quarterly newsletter. We continually strive to improve our communication with you. If there is a specific topic you would like to see in this newsletter, please e-mail comments and suggestions to [CrowWingLARA@gmail.com](mailto:CrowWingLARA@gmail.com).

On another note, we plan on launching our updated website very soon. You will find it at [www.CrowWingLARA.org](http://www.CrowWingLARA.org).

## President's Message

By: Phil Hunsicker



Like many of you, I am at that age where I am beginning to think about what my legacy will be. How will I be remembered? What of me will be carried on beyond my years here on Earth? We all want our lives to matter – whether it's

raising strong, successful families, or using our many blessings to support meaningful causes like cancer research, saving the rain forest, or feeding starving children in developing countries around the world. But what if our legacy could have meaning right here in our own back yard?

The Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA) and the Initiative Foundation – two organizations with rich histories of doing meaningful work in Crow Wing County – have established the Crow Wing Environment Protection Advised Fund (or the "CWEPA Fund"). If you live in Crow Wing County or have memories of vacations spent enjoying one of its 400-plus lakes, this is your chance to make a tax-deductible donation, and the benefits from your donation will happen locally – right here in Crow Wing County. Each year, the fund's interest earnings will be awarded as grants to support environmental stewardship projects that only happen within the borders of Crow Wing County. The bigger the fund grows, the more grants get awarded, which will help lake associations, conservation nonprofits, municipalities, schools and other organizations to enhance and preserve the natural qualities that make Crow Wing County so special.

For details, check out the CWEPA Fund link on our website (coming soon). Then talk it over with your spouse, your kids, your financial advisor, or your estate planner, and make the decision to let part of your legacy benefit the lands, waters and people of Crow Wing County.

Thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,

Phil

# MPCA Studies Find Unregulated Chemicals Widespread in Lakes and Rivers

Contact: Ralph Pribble, 651-757-2657

St. Paul, Minn. — Two studies released today by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) confirm that a wide variety of unregulated chemicals are ending up in Minnesota's lakes and rivers. The chemicals, including pharmaceuticals and personal care products, are of concern because many have properties that can interfere with the functioning of hormones in animals and people.

Previous studies have shown the chemicals are often found in streams that receive wastewater discharges. Limited sampling has also revealed that they are often found in lakes, which do not typically receive wastewater. But the number of lakes and rivers included in those investigations was not large enough to give an accurate picture of the extent of the contamination. The two latest studies provide statistical evidence of just how widespread the chemicals are in Minnesota's surface waters.

"What these studies really are measuring is the footprint of our society and how we live," said MPCA Commissioner John Linc Stine. "Our lakes and rivers are reflecting the chemicals we use and put into our bodies. These chemicals have very beneficial uses, but unfortunately they tend to stick around in the environment after their first use."

In the two studies, the MPCA in 2010 and 2012 sampled lakes and rivers using funds from the state of Minnesota and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, part of nationwide EPA surveys to find out what's in the nation's waters.

For the lakes study, 50 lakes were randomly selected across Minnesota. Samples were collected and analyzed for 125 chemicals. The study included analysis of "endocrine-active compounds" (EACs), so called because they mimic or interfere with the actions of naturally occurring hormones. These chemicals can have adverse effects on aquatic ecosystems and fish.

Results of the lake study were generally consistent with findings of previous but smaller studies that found commonly used chemicals widely distributed in Minnesota lakes. The insect repellent DEET was found in 76 percent of the lakes sampled, making it the most frequently detected chemical. Chemicals not previously analyzed — including cocaine, the antidepressant amitriptyline and the veterinary antibiotic carbadox — also were often detected in the lakes.

MPCA officials said the detection of cocaine was unexpected, one for which they couldn't account except that other studies have shown it can attach to fine particles and might be transported long distances through the atmosphere.

The rivers study analyzed 18 chemicals, including several pharmaceuticals and personal care products, and was conducted at 150 river locations selected at random. Parabens, a family of chemicals used as preservatives for food and cosmetics, were



commonly found, with methylparaben detected in more than 30 percent of the samples. A breakdown product of the corrosion inhibitor benzotriazole was found in 12 percent of the samples. Carbamazepine, used in medications to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and several antidepressants were also found.

Many of the chemicals in the MPCA studies were detected at very small concentrations, in the low parts per trillion. Such levels are of concern because EACs have the potential to adversely affect fish and other aquatic organisms even at extremely low levels. One part per trillion is roughly equivalent to one drop in a pool of water covering the area of a football field 43 feet deep.

The MPCA plans to continue testing surface waters for pharmaceuticals and EACs on a rotating five-year basis to identify any trends that may be occurring.

Reports on the studies and summary information are available on MPCA's Endocrine-disrupting compounds webpage (<http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/water/water-monitoring-and-reporting/water-quality-and-pollutants/endocrine-disrupting-compounds.html>). The two reports are titled "Pharmaceuticals and Endocrine Active Chemicals in Minnesota Lakes" and "Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products in Minnesota's Rivers and Streams." 🐾

## MPR Studies MPCA Findings

More information can be found in an MPR story about MPCA studies of lakes and rivers that showed some surprising chemicals (pharma and other endocrine disrupting compounds) turning up in 2010 and 2012 surveys:

<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2013/05/13/environment/lake-chemical-study>



# Get to know your Board Members

Tom Beaver

*What prompted you to become a member of the LARA board?*

One of the original Crow Wing Co. aquatic warriors lived on our lake and dragged Ann and me into a LARA meeting.

*What lake or river are you most connected to (in Crow Wing County)?*

Lower Cullen

*What lake or river environmental issue is most important to you, and what are you doing to help the cause?*

I became involved in shore land ordinance revision after fighting violations and the granting of egregious variances with no respect for the law..

*What can others do to help with this cause?*

After a decade of fighting city hall, with some wins, city hall changed the rules again excluding concerned aquatic advocates by eliminating and consolidating regulatory units of government and creating a small inclusive system.

It will take our county citizens becoming active in government or at least voting for officials who will represent environmental sustainability over so-called "property rights" to create a political environment that involves responsible interaction. I'm too old to play the game any more but I can still vote. 🐿



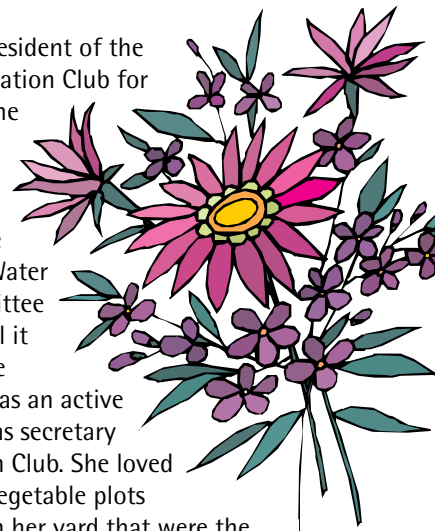
# LARA Board Loses One of Its Own

by Ann Beaver

Sue Jordan, a LARA Board of Directors member since September 2004, died suddenly at her lake home on March 28, 2013, one day short of her 65th birthday. She served as the LARA Treasurer from 2009 until her death and was an active member of several LARA committees. Board members could always count on Sue for a frank opinion on whatever was being discussed, and she helped keep many board meetings on task. We will truly miss her and all that she contributed to LARA's efforts during her too brief tenure.

Sue also served as president of the Lake Edward Conservation Club for many years and on the Crow Wing County Board of Adjustment for six years. She was a member of the Crow Wing County Water Plan Advisory Committee for several years until it was disbanded by the County Board. She was an active member and served as secretary of the Nisswa Garden Club. She loved gardening and had vegetable plots and perennial beds in her yard that were the envy of many. Sue also loved to read and was a member of a local book club, donating her gently used books to a local library when she and her friends were done with them.

Family and friends will gather in June at Sue's lake home for a time of sharing memories. 🐿



## "Introduction to Rain Gardens"

Date: Tuesday, July 9, 2013

Time: 12 noon to 1:00 pm

Location: Brainerd Public Library

Note: Class is free but pre-registration is suggested call 218-829-5574.

## LARA Board Of Directors 2012-2013

Ann & Tom Beaver  
218-568-5904  
beaver@uslink.net

Eleanor Burkett  
218-828-2326  
burke044@umn.edu

Mike Duval  
218-828-6261  
sorensonlk@yahoo.com

Jackie Froemming  
218-824-1068  
froem022@umn.edu

Jodi Eberhardt  
612-298-2935

Sharon Herwig  
218-828-4091  
CrowWingLARA@gmail.com

Sandy Holm  
218-765-3309  
rnscholm@brainerd.net

Phil Hunsicker  
218-825-9215  
phunsicker@q.com

Mike O'Brien  
218-764-2666  
mikeobriens@gmail.com

Harold Stewart  
218-963-3878 and  
507-289-5314  
stu5010@juno.com

George Vilfordi  
218-963-1021 and  
214-357-132  
georgevilfordi@verizon.net

Paula West  
218-838-5010  
westcom@brainerd.net

Officers:  
President – Phil Hunsicker  
Vice President – Sandy Holm  
Secretary – Ann Beaver  
Treasurer – Ann Beaver

Newsletter Editor: Sharon Herwig