



TWIN LAKES NEWS

• MAINTAIN • PROTECT • ENHANCE

• FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

• EDUCATION • COOPERATION

SPRING, 2020

TLPA NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 26, NO. 1

President's Message

Spring is here. I expected I'd write a few words about the lakes opening up, the welcome return of loons and waterfowl, high water levels, and the like. But this is no ordinary spring. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all of us. Lives and finances have been disrupted and filled with anxiety. Likely some of you have experienced health complications or perhaps even loss of loved ones – our communal sympathy goes out to you. We've all been disconnected from family and friends. Some have sheltered at the Twin Lakes for months, while others have long delayed or even canceled their customary arrival to the area. Life at the Twin Lakes this spring is and will be different from those that have come before. Yet we are all in this together, and we are a community – or several communities.

We are all members of the greater community of Washburn County and northern Wisconsin. As we go about our lives at the lakes, we must be very mindful to follow guidelines of social distancing and other precautions necessary to control the spread of this coronavirus. The healthcare resources in the area are creditable, but limited. The local healthcare system is crucial for so many people and purposes, but it could easily be overwhelmed if COVID-19 were carelessly spread.

We are members of a community that involves all in and around these three lakes – full time residents, seasonal dwellers, occasional weekenders, campers. Some are active supporters of our lake association, some not. Perhaps this pandemic has made us all a bit more aware of how we need to mindfully respect and support each other as we go about our lives at the lakes. While we go about our lives at the lakes in diverse ways, I hope we can do so with careful respect and a willingness to be helpful. Be willing to lend a hand (even at a distance) and please follow the various rules and reminders noted elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are also all critical members of the complex community that makes up the natural environment of the lakes. So many of our activities here can either improve or degrade the health of the soils, plants, and animals in or around the lakes and the condition of the water itself. It is the mission of the TLPA *to maintain, protect, and enhance the quality of the lakes and their surroundings for future generations*, and I hope that both members and non-members go about their lives at the lakes with such thoughts in mind.

Thanks everyone, and take special care.
Stuart Braem, President

stuartbraem@gmail.com

Welcome All, Time to be on the Water!!

It is the beginning of that wonderful season here on Twin Lakes. Time for boating, gardening, enjoying the wildlife, resting and, hopefully, visiting with our neighbors. The editor and members of the board of Twin Lakes Preservation Association extend our best wishes to all, with the hope that you and yours had a safe, enjoyable, and productive winter. And we look forward to a safe and enjoyable summer. But to assure this, we all need to continue to take care to respect our neighbors, both human and animal.

So here is a reminder of the regulations, both state and local, we must follow when on the water:

- All waters in Wisconsin are governed by what is called The Public Trust Doctrine. This means that lakes and other waterbodies belong to everyone. Everyone has a right to use and enjoy them and no one has a right to do things which inhibit someone else's right.
- Chicog and Minong town ordinances require boating quiet hours before 10:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. Any watercraft must be operated at a **no wake** speed. This means going as slow as you can and still maintain forward movement.
- On all Wisconsin Lakes there is **no wake** within 100 feet of shore for powerboats and within 200 feet of shore for personal watercraft. This is to prevent bank erosion, more important than ever in these times of high water.
- There is also **no wake** within 100 feet of another boat, swimmer, or swim raft.
- These regulations apply to South and North Twin Lakes. There is **no wake** on Middle Lake at all times.
- It is illegal to harass loons or other wildlife with a boat or personal watercraft.
- When skiing or towing tubes, all boats should travel counter-clockwise around the lake to avoid head-on confrontations. There must also be a second person ("spotter") watching the tow.
- It is illegal to operate a boat when intoxicated.
- Each boat must have a personal flotation device for each person in the boat.
- When you launch and remove your boat or personal watercraft from the water, Wisconsin law requires that you inspect it and the trailer in order to remove any aquatic plants or animals; you should also drain water from boats, live wells, motors, and trailers.
- In addition if you hire someone to launch a boat for you, assure that they have procedures in place to decontaminate their trailers between waterbodies.

These regulations are not burdensome. They are sensible and practical, designed to ensure that everyone can enjoy the water and that invasive species are not introduced into our lakes. So please stay safe as you enjoy your time on the water this summer!

THE MISSION OF THE TWIN LAKES PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION IS TO MAINTAIN, PROTECT, AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF THE LAKES AND SURROUNDING AREA FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS. WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS BY EDUCATION AND THE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF OUR MEMBERS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.

High Water

By Steve Myhre

The year was 1976 and I was a 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force home on leave when my wife and I purchased some vacant land on the north end of South Twin Lake. We were already familiar with this beautiful lake as her parents had built a cabin on the lake in 1956. A lot of memories have been made here as generations have enjoyed the clean waters and watched the seasons come and go.

So how much has the lake changed in the 40-plus years that I have been putting in and taking out the dock? In the early years, I would estimate that we had between 10 to 20 feet of beach. There was only one year back then where I recall the lake was at its ordinary high-water mark – a ridge where vegetation/trees start to grow. Then about 10-15 years ago we hit a period of drought. The lake not only looked visibly a lot smaller, but many cabin owners were having dreams that it almost completely dried up. Our beach had grown to around 40 feet – no problem taking out the dock and boat lift and storing on the shore. That brings me to more recent times. Around 5 years ago, a period of increasing rainfall and snow depths led to an apparent ever-increasing rise in the lake level. Typically, the lake would start out high in the spring and then go down over the course of the summer. However, now I was noticing that the lake was staying at the same level or even rising during the summer and we had virtually no beach. So I decided to begin measuring the level of the lake; I wanted to know if it was actually higher or lower from spring to fall and from year to year since I no longer had a beach to determine if the lake was rising.

In the fall of 2016, I dug a post into the ground at approximately 8 feet from the edge of the water line. This was my fixed point to measure the water level as it rose and fell. I waited until the next spring to perform my first measurement to allow for any settling of the post. On May 12, 2017, I made my base-level measurement. I used a 6 foot stake on which I placed a permanent mark 3 inches up from the bottom that was used to align with the top of the water when the stake was touching the bottom of the lake. Then a cord with a line level attached was stretched from the post in the ground to the stake in the lake and the cord was moved up or down the stake until the line showed level. A mark was then made on the stake with the date recorded. From that point on all other measurements would be compared to this initial (base) measurement.

I have made 10 measurements since beginning this endeavor. I started the measurements when the water was high and throughout the past 3 years I have seen the lake level fall to a low of 3 ½ inches below the base measurement to this spring's all time high of 4 ½ inches above the base. I have included all of my measurements in the table at the end of this article. However, the measurements alone don't adequately describe the rise of the lake. For instance, last fall the lake was 4 1/8 inches above the base measurement and I took note of where the water met the shoreline. When I returned to the lake this spring and looked at the shoreline, I could see that the water was much farther inland than last fall, however the water level was only 3/8 inches higher. The lake appeared to have come up or changed much more than my

Continued on page 6

A Walk In The Spring Woods



Anemone
Anemone canadensis
hosted by the
Robert H. Mohlenbrock,
hosted by the USDA-NRCS
PLANTS Database



**False
Solomon's-seal**
Maianthemum racemose
Robert H. Mohlenbrock,
hosted by the
USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



Bunchberry
Cornus Canadensis
Robert H. Mohlenbrock,
hosted by the USDA-NRCS
PLANTS Database



Pink Lady's Slipper
Cypripedium acaule
Janice Stiefel
<http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu/>



Gaywings
Polygala paucifolia
Merel R. Black
<http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu/>



Wild Lily-of-the-valley
Maianthemum canadense
Stuart Braem



**Jack-in-
the-pulpit**
Arisaema triphyllum
Stuart Braem



Starflower
Trentalis borealis
Stuart Braem



Bird's foot violet
Viola pedata
Merel R. Black
<http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu/>

In The Neighborhood



Marsh marigold
Caltha palustris
Robert H. Mohlenbrock,
hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database



White trillium
Trillium grandiflorum
Merel R. Black
<http://wisflora.herbarium.wisc.edu/>



High Water continued

measurement indicated. My observation is that as the lake rose above the ordinary high water mark it began to “spill over” into low lying areas and erode away the banks of the shore, creating a larger than normal lake. Therefore, as the lake gets larger it takes more water to raise the level of the lake. The lake has been moving out of its normal bounds, similar to a pool overflowing, and as a result my measurements of lake level are good directional indicators but do not necessarily capture the full effects of even a marginal increase in water.

After having enjoyed this lake and area for over 50 years and owning property on the lake for over 40 years, I can say with some confidence that South Twin Lake has hit an all-time high-water mark. All the lifeless trees along the shore might be another “dead” give away.

South Twin Lake Level Measurement

Date	Variation From Previous	Variation From Base
May 12, 2017	Initial Measure	Base Measure
July 10, 2017	1 ¼ inches Up	1 ¼ inches Up
Oct 13, 2017	5/8 inches Down	5/8 inches Up
May 8, 2018	4 1/8 inches Down	3 ½ inches Down
Jun 23, 2018	3 7/8 inches Up	3/8 inches Up
Oct 11, 2018	2 ¼ inches Down	1 ¾ inches Down
May 10, 2019	¾ inches Up	1 inch Down
May 26, 2019	3 ¼ inches Up	2 ¼ inches Up
Jul 5, 2019	½ inch Up	2 7/8 inches Up
Oct 7, 2019	1 ¼ inches Up	4 1/8 inches Up
Apr 19, 2020	3/8 inches Up	4 ½ inches Up

Staying “Firewise”

Our woods are in the process of “greening up and spring rains have so far reduced the danger of fire. In any case, it is a good idea to stay alert and to be careful. Here are some suggestions:

- ALWAYS check before you burn by calling: 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876).
- Remove pine needles and leaves from roof and gutters; rake debris from under decks, around wood fences, and 30’ from buildings. Store firewood 30’ from buildings.
- Keep lawn clean and green and mow to a length of 4” or less so to reduce fire intensity.
- Prune dead branches off trees and shrubs; remove branches of evergreen trees up to a height of 6-10 feet.
- When grilling, be careful with fuel. Dispose of briquettes and ashes carefully by digging a hole and covering the ashes up, or place in a metal barrel.



Firewise continued

- Avoid operating vehicles on dry grass or wooded trails. Be careful when using chain saws out in the woods.
- The town dump is available for YARD debris only, free of charge, by appointment; call 715-466-4525 or 715-416-1775 for an appointment. Debris burning is the #1 cause of wildfires in Wisconsin. If your burning project grows into a wildland fire, you will be liable for suppression costs and damages to property, including the value of timberland. There are better options than burning.
- Make sure your fire number can be seen easily.
- Sign up for the Washburn County Code Red emergency notification system by going to the county website (<http://www.co.washburn.wi.us/>) and clicking on CodeRED Emergency Alerts/more info SIGNUP.
- AND MOST OF ALL.....HAVE A SAFE SUMMER.

Smokey the Bear thanks you.

Fantastic Flyers—Dragonflies

Sometime during late May or early June, dragonflies will appear here around our lakes. They are amazing fliers; not only can they fly fast, they are also able to fly backwards, change directions in mid-air, stop and hover. And they are also amazing predators, eating many mosquitoes, gnats, flies and other insects. Their hunting skill is partly due to their mobile flying but also because of their huge compound eyes, which allow them to see almost everywhere.



Figure 1: Calico Pennant

There are many species of dragonflies and damselflies around the world, with over 100 species here in Wisconsin. They are also very ancient, with the insects we so enjoy seeing today dating from around 180 million years ago, along with the dinosaurs.



Figure 2: Chalk-fronted Corporal

But the beautifully colored, gossamer-winged adult dragonflies are only the culmination of a long larval stage of development during which the nymphs live in the water feeding on almost anything there. At the end of this stage the dragonfly crawls out of the water, the exoskeleton breaks open, and the long abdomen and wings unfurl. The dragonfly's body dries and hardens. Then they take flight. And they are a wonder to behold!

Photos: Stuart Braem

**TWIN LAKES PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 410
MINONG, WI 54859**



TO:

Join the Lake Association? Why On Earth Not? We monitor lake water quality, provide important information via three newsletters a year, publish a free Handbook of Best Practices for lake property owners, and have fun together at the Summer Social and Annual Fall Meeting. Dues are only \$25.00 a year. To join, fill out the form below and mail with a check to TLPA, Box 410, Minong WI 54859. And thanks!

Name _____

Your Lake _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

Lake Address _____

Phone _____ Lake Phone _____