

Lake News

2016 Fall Issue 93



One on One with Rich Hess, CGWLAA Fisheries Chair

Editor's note: Last spring we discussed the topic of Aquatic Invasive Species in our One on One discussion with Rich Hess, a member of our CGWLAA board. Rich also handles the area of fisheries and now, in this issue, we asked him questions about this area.

Q: You work with our DNR Fisheries managers on the fish populations in our chain. What are the main things we're doing to improve the fisheries?

A: The most important thing the DNR is doing is annually collecting information on the fish community through gill net and electrofishing assessments. Through these efforts they have been able to monitor important



sport fisheries such as walleye, northern pike and yellow perch. The 8-year Walleye Fry Stocking Study in Woman Lake began in 2008 and ended last year. Walleye fry marking was to end in 2012. However, the DNR agreed to

mark additional walleye fry being stocked beyond 2012 and collect more information on the walleye population and fishery. These efforts will continue this year.

The DNR is also going to conduct another adult walleye tagging project in the chain and conduct a creel census this year as well. Our last creel census was in 2006 and things have certainly changed since then. The walleye tagging project will help Fisheries researchers and managers estimate their abundance in the chain and where they are being caught based upon the creel census results and anglers reporting tagged walleye.

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Meet a Neighbor: Jim Eide

Jim Eide, a resident of Woman Lake since 1968, served in the U.S. Army air corps during World War II as a nose gunner aboard a B-24 Liberator bomber.

Although he was a little reluctant to talk about his experiences during those days of long ago, he says he saw lots of active duty during assignments which took him on



bombing missions over the southwest Pacific including New Guinea, and other strategic islands leading to the Philippines. "Our job was to take out the Japanese planes that were on the

ground and destroy the runways they used for take-offs and landings," said Eide. He remembers that their planes and equipment were not always in the best



Eide served as a nose gunner on a bomber during WWII

shape because, as he said, "resources were scarce but we always did the best we could with what we had to work with."

Eide says he and many of his high school buddies signed up for military service when they graduated from Crosby-Ironton High School in 1942. According to Eide they had no idea what to expect after they joined but wanted to do anything they could to help out. He initially began training to be a pilot, his first choice, but when there was a big shortage of gunners to fly on those missions he and many others in his group of recruits were reassigned to that responsibility.

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Krusin' with Don



I wish to extend a special **THANK YOU!** to Jim Lewis. Jim, a valuable member of the association board who has headed up our Shoreline Naturalization committee, is now

stepping down. Thanks, Jim, for your time and energy! Taking his place will be Myles Wagner. Myles and Jim launched this program together several years ago.

Our Water Quality chairperson has been Gary Meyer. Gary has decided to step down but he plans to continue as one of the volunteers who collect monthly water samples during the summer. We are now looking for someone to step forward to chair that committee and coordinate the volunteers who do the water testing. Give me a call or send me an email if you can help in this capacity.

Your association owns and maintains 42 standards which carry the names of all lake association members. This summer the board voted to put the association name at the top of each standard. We have sent out emails asking for help in identifying names of those who no longer live here or who have passed away so that we could clean them up. In doing this we found many names of folks who were members at one time who still live on the road but are no longer members.

There are currently more than 150 names that should not be on the standards because they are no longer members. Starting June 1st of next year these names will be taken down unless they renew their membership before then. The cost of a yearly membership is only \$25.00. As one member said at the annual meeting "it's the best deal in the north woods." For a list of what your \$25

membership fee helps fund please read the annual report summary posted on our website.

Speaking of our website, if you have not already checked it out now is a good time to do so. The minutes from all our monthly meetings and past newsletters are there, as well as many other interesting items. One in particular I would like to point out is the story of North Star Camp, the second resort to be built on Woman Lake. Jeff Davis researched and

wrote this very interesting history of the camp which you can now find on the website under the Publications tab.

As cool temperatures return to remind us that winter is coming so does the cooling water temperature.

Make sure you stay safe this fall while fishing or hunting and wear your life jacket. Have an enjoyable fall and winter wherever you may be.



Don Kruse, President

This eagle was quite a swimmer!

By Don Kruse

I enjoy getting up early in the morning and having my coffee outside. Nature is always on the move this time of the day. The ducks are always roaming the shoreline, geese can be heard across the bay, loons are swimming by and on occasion a beaver or mink swims by. The song birds seem so happy as they are out and about. But what happened on this particular morning was quite astounding.

It was May 18, a very clear and calm morning with lots of sun. I filled my coffee cup and was standing outside when I heard a splash. It was a **huge** splash and my first thought was that a beaver was in the area. I scanned the shoreline but saw nothing. Then I looked further out on the lake and I could see a dark brown spot and ripples coming from that area. It was at least 60 to 70 yards out from the house so it was hard to tell exactly what it was. I hurried inside to get my field glasses so I could make out a little more clearly what it was.

To my huge surprise it was an adult eagle floating in the lake. I knew birds like this are not normally in the water. It seemed to be struggling and its back was toward me. I started to think that this eagle may need my help.

Should I get in my boat and see if I can rescue it? But then I thought it may be too late to save this bird--but I had to try! I went to the dock, all the while keeping an eye on the eagle. Then it turned around and looked directly at the shore.

What happened next left me totally speechless: it spread its wings and used them to swim towards the shoreline--like Olympian Michael Phelps doing the breast stroke. It spread its wings over the water and then folded them back against its body moving itself slowly but steadily forward. When its wings were flat against its body you could barely see it. Then it would reach forward and make another stroke. When doing this it was high in the water. Finally, it made its way safely to shore.

When it got to an area shallow enough where it could stand up I could see that it had a fish in its talons. The fish was a northern about 26 to 28 inches long--too big for the eagle to fly with. It then tore some meat off and flew back to its nest to feed young ones across the bay from us. I am sure it came back several times that day. What an experience! It's one I'll never forget!

Order trees or plants now for pickup next spring!

The lake association is once again offering **five FREE** trees and/or shrubs for each membership to encourage shoreline naturalization. As in previous years, additional trees and shrubs can be ordered for \$1 each. Payment for extra trees or shrubs or flowers must be received by December 30.

This year we're offering something new: a hearty blooming plant called Prairie Blazing Star, a favorite of Monarch butterflies, humming birds, and bees. Because of the cost difference and the way the blazing star is shipped, if you order this blooming plant it will comprise your entire order and you will receive three of them.

Please email your order to: Silverfox1050@msn.com (no order

form necessary) or mail in the order form below to: Myles Wagner, 4074 Hawk Trail NW, Hackensack, MN 56452. **Orders must be in by Dec. 30.**

Pick-up of the trees, shrubs or flowers will be in the spring at the Myles Wagner home at the above address (the blue, two-story house and garage near the old public access on Woman Lake off County Road 5). Orders can be picked up the first or second week-end in May. You will get a reminder of when your order may be obtained.

Orders done by email are easier to process and for communications. If you don't have email, please be sure to include your name and phone number on the



order form.

If you prefer to order additional plants that aren't on the order form, you can do so by going to the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District website: www2co.-wing.mn.us/swcd to see what else is available. The CWSWCD offers a much broader selection, but you will need to order an entire bundle or kit.

You can also send this order with payment to us and we will include it in our order which may qualify for a discount. Most of the trees and shrubs are bare root and are 8-24" in size.

Please call Myles Wagner (218-682-3793) with any questions you may have. We look forward to working with you.

Species	Height	Soil	#	Species	Height	Soil	#	
Sugar Maple	50-65'	Moist/wet		White Oak	65-85'	Well drained		
Red (Norway) Pine	50-80'	Sand/ well drained		Prairie Blazing Star (3-Pack)	2-3'	Moist/wet		
White Pine	80-100'	Sand/loam/clay		High Bush Cranberry	8-12'	Dry/wet		
Paper Birch	50-70'	dry/wet		Serviceberry/Juneberry	6-9'	Dry/wet		
							Total:	

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail: _____

Mail to: Myles Wagner, 4074 Hawk Trail NW, Hackensack, MN 56452 or (better choice) send e-mail to Silverfox1050@msn.com

Could you step forward to become our *Lake News* editor?

Our current Lake News editor, John Gundale, will be stepping down from this position after the 2017 Spring issue is completed next May. If you have writing/ editing skills and could lay out the newsletter on your computer we invite you to call our president, Don Kruse, 363-2580. The editor also works with a printer and mailing firm to complete the production process. If you have skills in this area we would love to have you join our leadership team!

Cabin memories of a young boy

Born in the suburb of Highland Park, nestled near the heart of St. Paul, I could hardly call myself a country kid. If anything I was as city as they came.

However, every weekend growing up, I was able to shed that identity for the country kid inside of me, if you could call it that, by heading to our family cabin. It was a two-hour drive, and I was forced to read the entire

way – no electronics. Once we got there it was straight to work, cutting grass, taking the cover off the boat, and more. But it wasn't work, it was fun. I got to be a kid in a way that fewer and fewer kids today

are: let loose outside to do whatever I wanted.

The cabin was a teacher, one of the best I've had. It taught me to be brave

when learning how to ski (which has become a favorite hobby). It taught me patience when learning how to fish, and subsequently how to handle defeat when we rarely caught anything. It taught me awareness, because your marshmallow will be up in flames if you take your eye off it for a split second. It taught me creativity. The annual contest for who had the best

scary story around the campfire was always competitive.

Most important, though, the cabin taught me the value of family. Away from all the distractions that come with the

city, you really do come to value the interactions with one another. It puts people on a more intimate level. The cabin had a certain sense of quiet that

makes you more conscious of those around you and, to be frank about it, when there's nothing else to do, you tend to interact more with your family out of necessity.

What I appreciate the most about the cabin was its resilience to time. Year after year, summer after summer, it remained unchanged. No matter when I walk through the door, the place always feels like we just walked out. Everything is right where we left it, ready for us to pick up where we left off.

Today, we have a new cabin... but the feeling hasn't changed. No matter what's going on or how scattered I feel, it's reassuring to know that the cabin is there waiting for us, ready with more grass to be cut and with more memories to make.

Shaymus O'Brien, St. Paul (Printed with permission from the StarTribune)



Water Patrol promotes safety on our lakes

By Ted Sigtenhorst

What is this Woman, Girl Lake Volunteer Water Patrol we've all heard so much about? Well, it is a volunteer organization sponsored and supported by the Cass County Sheriff's



office. We patrol the waters of Woman and Girl Lakes checking for compliance with state boating regulations and help boaters if the need arises.

The sheriff's office provides a boat equipped with a 2-way radio which allows direct contact with the Sheriff's dispatch center should the need arise. We wear high visibility vests labeled with "Sheriff Department Volunteer."

Most of our members live on our chain of lakes and patrol in pairs on weekends and holidays. Several are husband/wife teams.

During 2016, the Woman, Girl Lake Volunteer Water Patrol activity started on the walleye opener in May and continued through September. A two-person crew is scheduled for all weekend

days with two crews scheduled on holidays when extra crews are available.

There are currently 19 volunteers including two reserves who volunteered for over 200 hours during the 2015 patrol season and we are well on our way to meeting that goal again this year. Each crew fills out a detailed patrol log during each day on the wa-

ter for review by the Sheriff's office at the end of the patrol season. Our patrol boat is also used by the Cass County Sheriff's Office in support of the 4th of July fireworks event.

Our main objective is to promote boating safety, but we also monitor boat licensing with careful attention to license expiration dates displayed on both sides of the hull.

One of our most enjoyable tasks is rewarding children under age 10 who we "catch" wearing a personal flotation device, as demanded by state law. The reward is a coupon for a free ice cream cone at Frosty's in Longville or for treats at the Bear Pause Theater in Hackensack.

For more information about our volunteer water patrol or to join us as a volunteer, contact me at 363-3634 or email tsigtenhorst@arvig.net.

(Jim Eide continued)

During the next three years of active duty, during the height of the war in the Pacific, Jim participated in more than 50 high-risk missions. "We were lucky - on one mission our plane was hit with enemy fire, our plane was riddled with bullet holes and we lost an engine. We threw everything out of the plane we could to lighten the load. Although we were reported as officially "lost," we landed on the island of Morotai where we stayed overnight. We left the next day with another crew and airplane because ours was no longer flyable. Everyone was pretty happy when we showed up and we had a party."

When the war was over, Eide had a big decision to make: what to do for a living. After returning to the U.S., Eide enrolled at the CAL-Aero Tech Institute in California where he learned airplane mechanical repairs. He received A and E certificates, and his airframe and engine licenses. That led to a job with Northwest Airlines, first as a mechanic, then later after studying and training at his own expense, to a place in the cockpit, the position he had hoped for when he first



Eide, a big Vikings football fan, poses with a brick he purchased for the new Vikings stadium.

joined the air corps during the war. "We had three people in the cockpit to fly the airplane," says Eide. "You had to pass a test and put in the required number of hours before you could move up to be captain," he explained. Eide progressed from flight engineer to co-pilot to captain. He enjoyed flying and eventually flew mostly international flights, such as to Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea and Europe flying Boeing 747s.

Jim reluctantly retired at the age of 60—the mandatory retirement age at

Following retirement Eide continued his love of travel which included several photographic safaris to Kenya, annual WWII squadron reunions, fishing, reading, gardening, and enjoying his family (and dog) who surround him year-round at the family cabin.

Eide's children, their spouses and grandchildren have wonderful childhood memories of their activities on Woman Lake. (Editor's note: Two of his five children, Victoria Calder and Steve Eide with his wife Marilyn happened to be visiting their father at his cabin the day I interviewed Eide for this story.)

His daughter, Victoria, recalled the yearly festive Christmas celebrations they have at the cabin. "Several of us trek out in the woods, permit and saw in hand, to cut down the family Christmas tree. The cabin is overflowing with people - from a dozen up plus

4-6 dogs. Dad makes blueberry pancakes (the best!) by the dozen and our Christmas dinners are prepared with all hands on deck. For several years the guys were outside deep-frying turkeys in the cold, Christmas lights glowing around them. Lots of laughter and joy!"

Eide's home is a spacious log structure with big windows facing the lake and a loft facing down to a big stone fireplace in the family room. Eide is now busy remodeling his cabin, although he admits to getting a lot of help from his children who visit him frequently.

Eide, who turns 93 this October, feels very fortunate to be in good health and to live on Woman Lake. To Jim Eide, our good neighbor, we wish many more healthy years and heartfelt thanks for the years you gave in service to our country!



Eide surrounded by his family at a recent Christmas reunion at the cabin

that time. "Shortly after I retired they moved the mandatory age to 65," he said.

Before Eide retired, he purchased an empty lot on Woman Lake and worked on building his log cabin during his time off with enthusiastic help from his children.

Q: What is the most important thing we've learned from the walleye fry stocking study?

A: One of the most important things that emerged was that in the past we were stocking too many walleye fry. The fry stocking rate was determined based upon the number of eggs taken annually at the Boy River Trap Facility. The DNR policy was to return 10% of the fry that successfully hatched from the eggs taken. Since the egg-take varied greatly from year to year based on annual stocking needs for Boy River strain walleye in our area, so did the stocking rate in Woman Lake. The stocking rate ranged from 3 million to 13 million walleye fry annually.

More fish put into a body of water is not necessarily better. Each body of water has a carrying capacity and can only provide a limited amount of forage for fish species such as walleye, bass and northern pike. Excessive stocking can result in high mortality and poor growth for predators such as walleye. The preliminary recommendation from the study is to annually stock our chain with approximately 1.2 million fry. This stocking rate has produced better survival and growth of walleye. These fish later recruit into the sport fishery for all of us to enjoy.

Q: How will the study affect our actions going forward?

A: As previously stated, there will be fewer walleye fry stocked in our chain which is expected to result in a more consistent production of better year classes to continually recruit into the sport fishery. The DNR has also interacted with members of our Lake Association, fishing guides and the City of Longville to form a citizen input group. This group has successfully developed a 10-year management plan for the chain. It is an important collaborative effort that is greatly appreciated.

Q: Overall, do you think the fishing has gotten better, worse or stayed about the same during the past 10 years?

A: This is one of the profound questions of fisheries management. Everything is relative, so it really depends on who you are talking to. Avid, aggressive anglers may feel that the walleye fishery for larger size fish has not improved based upon their recent catches. And the less aggressive and experienced anglers may feel that they are now catching more fish and enjoying the experience.

I arrived here in 2005, and currently I am hearing more comments about a better walleye fishery than a worse one. However, some walleye anglers who have been here for a long time have said that the fishing is worse now than it used to be. But, things have changed in the lake, especially with regard to the reduction in the amount and distribution of aquatic vegetation most likely due to the invasion of rusty crayfish in the early 1980s.

Many anglers said they used to catch walleye and northern pike in the weed beds that are no longer there. So, the walleye and northern pike may be using other parts of the lake or even be more mobile, now moving more frequently from place to place. Some successful walleye anglers fish only at night or at dawn and dusk due to the water clarity. Walleye have light-sensitive eyes and tend to become less active on bright days in clear bodies of water.

Q: Are you optimistic about the future fishing prospects in our chain?

A: Yes, I am, mainly because the DNR and local citizenry are working together more closely to address fishery issues and invasive species threats in our chain. And, the DNR, Cass County, ACCL and MAISRC are all supporting programs to help protect our lakes from invasive species. Hopefully, this will collectively result in a more balanced fish community with improved sport fisheries.

Q: Does the annual walleye egg take each spring on the Boy River hurt, help or have no effect on the fishing in our chain?

A: Ultimately, as a result of the walleye fry stocking study, the return of the fry from the egg take is helping the walleye fishery. I say this because not only is the hatch rate of the eggs collected much higher in the hatchery than in the lake chain, but the stocking of a more appropriate number of fry each spring is expected to support improved growth and survival, and, subsequently, a more consistent population of healthy walleye and a good sport fishery.

Q: What can the average person do to help make our chain a better place to fish?

A: Here is my laundry list of things we must all do as anglers and boaters:

- * Understand and obey all of the fisheries regulations for our chain.
- * Support the DNR, Cass County, ACCL and MAISRC in their efforts to combat aquatic invasive species.
- * Keep in contact with our legislators and encourage them to continue and expand statewide programs to address AIS issues.
- * Be vigilant in preventing AIS from being transported to our chain; inspect our watercraft each time before we place it in our chain. If you are returning from an infested lake go to a decontamination station and have your watercraft cleaned and disinfected.
- * Don't pollute the waters of our chain; don't throw garbage into our waters, don't release left over minnows or other live bait into our waters; and, maintain a natural shoreline with vegetation that buffers our waters from unwanted runoff of herbicides, fertilizers and other substances.

Fishing with Bill



What a summer! Fishing on Woman Lake has never been better. I hope everyone got a chance to experience the awesome resource we have.

With the fishing as good as it has been it's a good time to remember how important it is to successfully release fish back into the lake.

The most often overlooked release strategy is to handle fish with **wet** hands because dry hands will remove the important slime that protects the fish. Secondly, when holding a fish it is important to support the fish with both hands. Holding a fish by its mouth or gills adds unneeded stress.

When the fish is ready to be released it's a good idea to hold the fish upright in the water and gently circulate water through its gills. Once the fish is able to right itself

and seems strong enough to swim on its own, let her go.

One of the popular techniques on Woman Lake is live bait rigging. This technique often results in fish that swallow hooks. If the hook is too deep to remove with a trusty set of pliers, its best to just cut the line and leave the hook in the fish. A fish's stomach acid will dissolve the hook over time.

I still think the best fishing of the year is ahead of us, so get out there and practice these catch and release techniques!

My Blackberry Picking Excursion

by Egon Overgaard

Since this past spring I have been keeping my eye on a patch of blackberries along the road leading in to my home. When they were flowering they were covered in white blossoms all along their vines. It looked like it might produce a bumper crop.



As the summer progressed so have the berries. One surprise for me has been that they do not ripen all at once, instead only a few have become ripe each time I check. Oh well, at least I get a taste.

Finally, today I believe there are enough that I might be able to pick a bucket full. I decide long pants might be in order, and a long sleeve shirt as well. Wise move! I grab my ice cream bucket and begin picking, at first one berry at a time and then, as I work my way further into the patch, I decide I can get more by placing the bucket under the vine and dropping the ripe berries into the bucket. I am developing a rhythm: pull the vine

down, strip the berries into the bucket, and occasionally stop to nurse my fingers. The thorns are definitely very sharp.

As I get further into the patch the other part of berry picking becomes more and more evident. The mosquitoes are getting as thick as the berries. There is a constant buzz in my ears. Oh, but look at those berries over there!

I begin to wonder if berries and mosquitoes perhaps evolved together. Berries need a wet spring to set a good crop, as do the mosquitoes. I believe I am really onto something here; I become convinced that the mosquitoes know the berries will attract their warm-blooded prey. Why else do they seem to be thickest right where the berries are? I wonder what the berries get from the mosquitoes.

I must be about a quart low by now. My blood is flowing out at about the same rate as my bucket fills. Now and then a thorn scratches me and I see blood flow-

ing. At least the mosquitoes haven't gotten it all. Sometimes, I swear, a vine reaches out and completely wraps around my arm. I begin to wonder if I don't have enough for a pie. A few more to eat and I'm homeward bound to make a pie. I hope it will be as good as they look in the pail.

Maybe I'll go again tomorrow.



Editor's note: Egon Overgaard is a CGWLAA member who has volunteered to contribute articles for Lake News. He and his wife, Carol, also help out on the Roadside Cleanup committee. Thank you!

Lake News



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