

LAKE MINNIE BELLE MESSENGER

A Newsletter from the Lake Minnie Belle Improvement Association

Summer 2017

“Summertime and the livin’ is easy...”

Marilyn Buboltz, Editor

That may be what many of us are saying, but it is a very busy time for Board Members and Volunteers to tackle the summer lake projects. You will again find the articles in this newsletter very heavily focused on identification and management of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). The board feels it’s extremely important to communicate to you the issues and challenges we face in maintaining and improving the quality of the environment we cherish on Lake Minnie Belle.

We would encourage you to take the time to read the “*Dockside*” magazine you would have received in the past couple of weeks. It has some very comprehensive articles that pertain to us living on the lake.

If you are not a member of the Lake Minnie Belle Improvement Association, please join us for the annual meeting on July 15th to become more informed and involved. This year dinner will be provided and all you need to do is bring a lawn chair, enjoy the company of other lake residents, and learn more about the projects that are currently being worked on.

Hopefully you are enjoying spending time with family and friends on beautiful Lake Minnie Belle!

Enjoy the summer and hope to see you on the 15th!

2017 Annual Meeting And Pork Chop Dinner

Saturday, July 15th
Beckville Church Picnic Grounds
Meeting @ 11 AM
Pork Chop Dinner @ Noon
(Pork Chops provided by B&B Sports)

Speaker
Gene Jeseritz, DNR Fisheries

Board Election
Door Prizes
Bring a lawn chair and relax!



State of the Lake

From LMBIA Chairman, Tom Hess

Summer Greetings,

We are settling into implementing all of the winter planning. The big thing this time of year is working with the company that does the treating of AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) on the lake. It is a two-part program. Early spring we concentrate on curly leaf pondweed, which we try to treat before the water temperature gets to 60 degrees. At this point, it is in its early stages of growth and its bio-mass is minimal. This spring, we treated two acres in the southwest bay but were not allowed to treat one acre on the west side by the storm warning siren due to an abundance of a native plant called white stem pondweed. The follow-up post-treatment survey showed a good kill where we treated but also showed explosive growth in the one-acre site that wasn't treated. At the same time we do the post-treatment survey we also do the preliminary survey for EWM (Eurasian Water Milfoil). What was found was that our treatment efforts were starting to pay off. We have applied to treat 14.4 acres of this invasive which is a reduction from 23 acres three years ago. We are making progress but we need to remain vigilant and continue our efforts to control these two invasive plants. Long term will we ever eliminate them? Not likely until the scientists can come up with a working plan. The good news is the legislature, after some coaxing by folks that really believe in preserving our wonderful water resources and other environmental concerns, continued to fund the U of M AIS lab, which is becoming a nationally recognized center in the battle with AIS, along with other funding for various environmental concerns. This is where all of us must step up and become active. Not everybody can or wants to do water quality testing or go out on the lake looking for bad weeds, but all of us can talk to our legislators about these issues and implore them to get on board for this very important issue.

Lastly, the good Lord has blessed us with this beautiful lake. Let's keep it that way. We have been lucky in dodging the worst spring storms. This summer at our Annual Meeting we will be featuring a pork chop dinner courtesy of Butch and Jeremy of B & B Sports. The Assistant Fisheries Supervisor, Gene Jezeritz, will be at the meeting to talk about everything fishing and how the lake is doing in that respect.

The annual July 4th boat parade will be sadly missing our music man, Wally Pikal, as he is playing his horn in heaven!

I could go on with much more, but, instead, come to the Pork Chop Dinner on Saturday, July 15, at the Beckville Picnic Grounds, and talk to the various board members. They have a wealth of information to share on all aspects of the lake and other environmental issues.



July 4th Water Parade

1:00 PM Start Time
Begins at the Lagoon

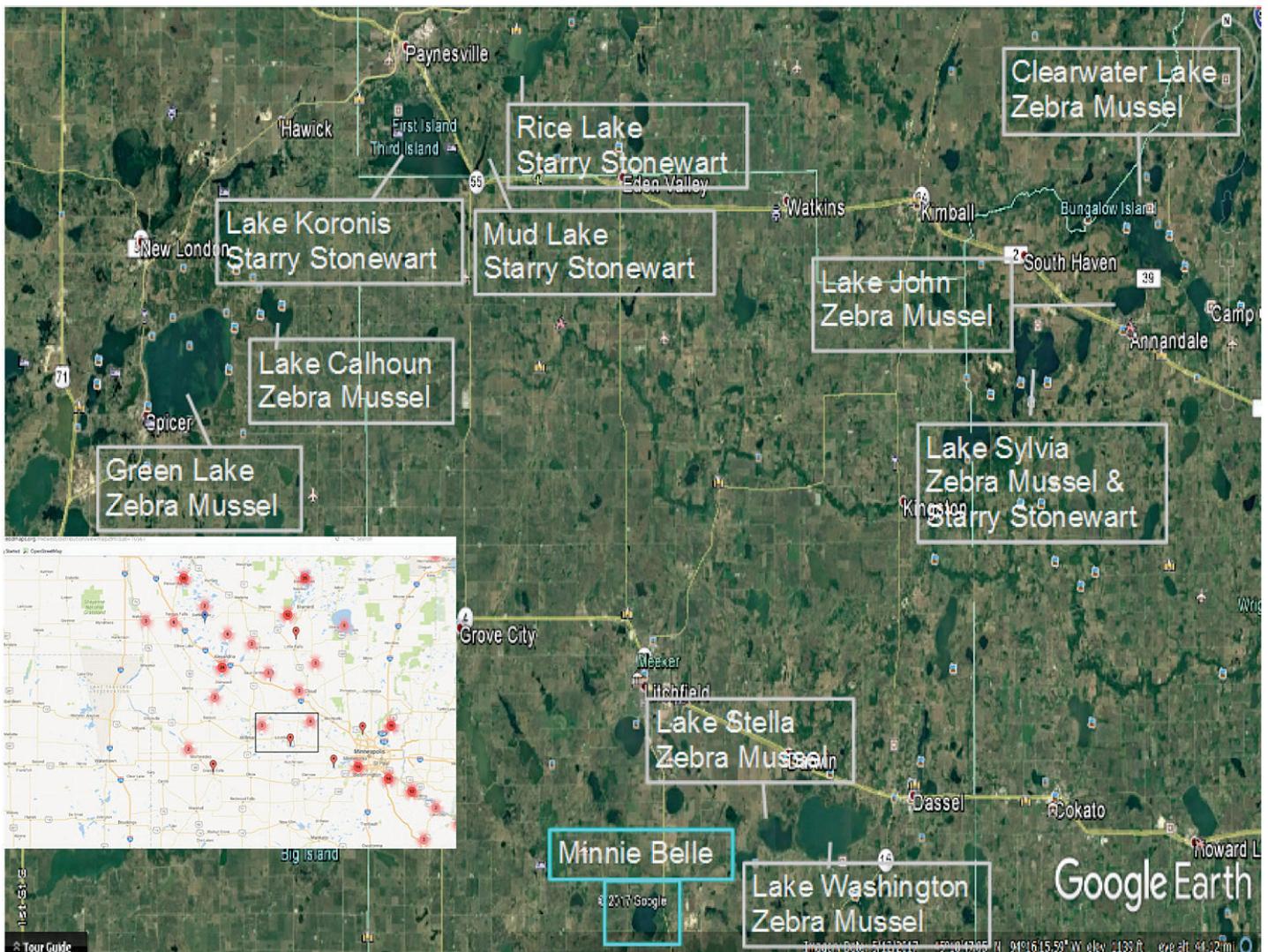
Roger Jergens Lead Pontoon
Playing Wally's Music

Lead Pontoon will set the pace.
Please fall in behind and keep some
distance so all boats can be appreciated.

Let's decorate those boats
and **HAVE FUN!**



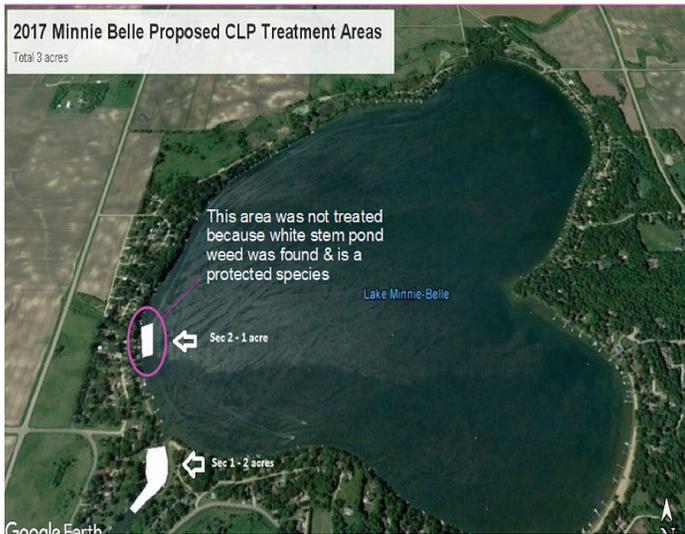
Local Lakes infested with Zebra Mussels and/or Starry Stonewort



Images of Starry Stonewort on Lake Koronis



These are the maps identifying the locations of Curly Leaf Pondweed and Eurasian Milfoil found during our survey this spring and treatment areas.

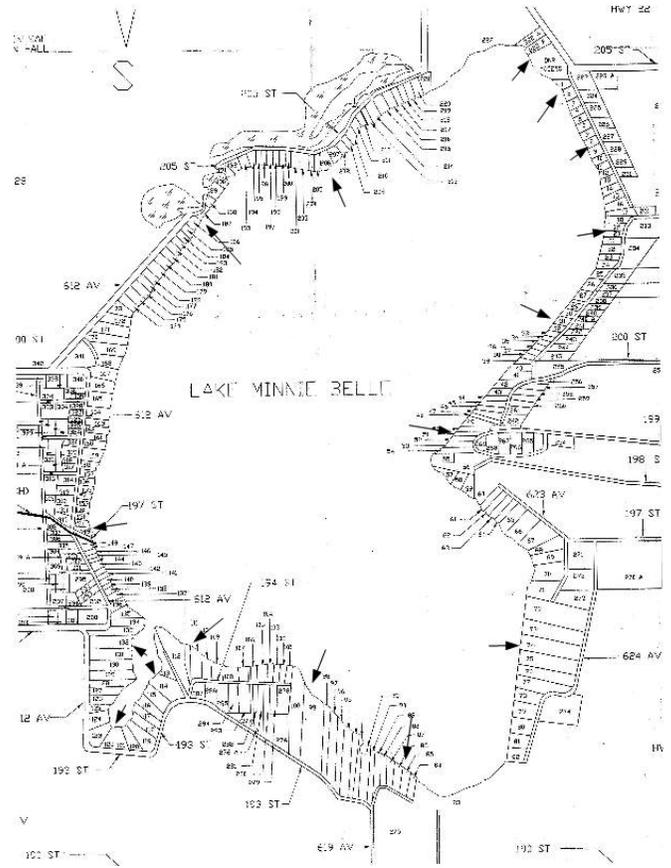
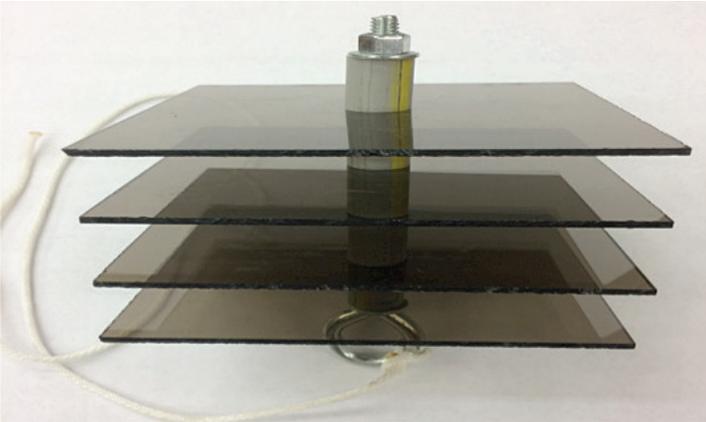


Thank you!

A special thank you to **Mark and Ann Schmidtbauer's Creative Graphics** for publishing the *LMBIA Messenger*. This service is done at no cost to our organization. We greatly appreciate your generosity!

Zebra Mussel Traps / Monitoring

Our lake captains and other volunteers have put Zebra Mussel traps on the end of their docks. We check them at least every two weeks and send the samples to the U of M for verification. These are pictures of Zebra Mussels and the traps that were made by Cliff Willhite. The map highlights our lake Zebra Mussel trap locations.



Diver Inspections for Starry Stonewort Steve Stepien

We will be using divers to look for Starry Stonewort and Zebra mussels around the DNR landing in mid June and then again at the end of September. Diver assisted AIS surveying is a proven technique for locating small beds of aquatic invasive species that have not expanded to the point where they are noticed causally or have created a nuisance. Finding these small beds makes it significantly cheaper to treat and contain rather than waiting until they become a problem for fishing and recreational boaters. Using trained AIS spotters to locate initial sources of infestation will help in the total management program.



Lake Minnie Belle DNR landing inspection area

Stopping the spread of aquatic invasive species

DNR rules and guidelines for boats and bait

Boats:

Clean all visible plants, zebra mussels and other prohibited species from our watercraft, trailer and other water-related equipment.

Drain water from boat, ballast tanks, portable bait container, motor, bilge, live well and boat plug.

Dispose of unwanted bait, including minnows, leeches and worms, in the trash. It is illegal to release bait into a water body or release aquatic animals from one water body to another.

Watercraft Inspections – Inspectors are trained to:

- Introduce themselves as a water craft inspector.
- Provide you tips on how to inspect our own equipment.
- Physically inspect compartments that may hold water, such as live wells or bilge.
- Deny launch if (1) the inspector finds invasive species or any plants attached or (2) you refuse an inspections. Although inspectors have the authority to deny launch, they will work with you to try to bring your watercraft into compliance.
- Inspectors will not deny launch based solely on where, or when you last used your watercraft.
- Ask you questions to help improve the DNR’s inspection program.

What about on-site watercraft decontamination?

An inspector may require your watercraft to be decontaminated prior to launching. The DNR posts decontamination unit locations online at www.mndnr.gov/decon. The decontamination is free.

Decontaminate your own watercraft by spraying with high-pressure hot water and dry for 5 days.

Bait:

- If you choose to keep your bait when done fishing, you must exchange water in bait buckets with tap or bottled water prior to leaving any water body.
- You can’t dispose of unwanted minnows and leeches in Minnesota water. Unused bait, including night crawlers, should be put in the garbage.
- You can’t use whole or parts of game fish, goldfish or carp for bait.
- You cannot take minnows or leeches from infested waters.

Docks and Lifts:

Used docks, lifts or other water-related equipment transferred from lakes that are listed as infested with aquatic invasive species must be decontaminated by using high-pressure hot water and placed in quarantine for 21 days before they can be introduced into another lake.

Summer Boat Inspections at the DNR Landing Steve Stepien

The goals of the boat inspection program are three fold;

Education: The education part is to train boaters to drain all water from their watercraft. It is important that we don't transfer water from one lake to another. Each lake has its own biodiversity including bacteria, virus and fauna. Zebra mussels at the veliger stage are barely visible and can be transferred in water contained in bait buckets, live wells and residual water in the lower unit of the motor. Adult mussels can still survive up to 5 days out of the water. After 6 weeks of boat inspections we find over 90% of the boaters entering our lake have been through the inspection process and are diligent about following the cleaning and draining procedure. This is a very positive part to the program.

Detection: Because our lake is surrounded by lakes that do have zebra mussels and starry stone wart (see the map of local infested lakes) we are finding a few boats that attempt to enter our lake that have prohibited weeds and zebra mussels on their boat and/or trailer. When weeds are found we help the owner identify and remove them before allowing access. We

have turned away 4 boats so far because we found zebra mussels. These boats were sent to Annandale for decontamination. Follow up phone calls found that 3 completed the decontamination but one just left. All infested boats were documented and issued permits to transport their boat. This information was also relayed to the DNR and local sheriffs office. All inspectors have taken DNR training to identify and document aquatic invasive species.

Data collection: The DNR is collecting the data in order to track boater movements and monitor boater density. Most boats stay very local, utilizing a single lake or visit just a few. There are an estimated 5% that jump from lake to lake on a regular basis. They don't stay local and visit infested lakes on a regular basis. The down side is they don't just move about on weekends and rarely wait 5 days before entering a non-infested lake. Because the data on these boaters is being tracked we can identify them and do a very thorough job of inspecting their boats.

For those of you who have gone through the inspectio, I thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Water Monitoring Stan Kittelson

It's hard to believe, but we are already in the second month of Lake Monitoring/water sampling for this season. Stream Monitoring of water coming into the lake last week was restricted because of night time rains and my being unable to sample due to other commitments. Slow and steady rains usually do not give us enough water runoff for an adequate stream sampling.

The Total Phosphorous and Chlorophyll for May were in the normal range for our lake. The May Secchi reading of 16.5 feet for transparency was below last year's May sampling. However, heavy rains in early May could have biased this sampling.

For a little review on Secchi, we lower an 8 inch white disk into the water in the center of the lake until we can no longer see it. That distance is measured in feet and inches of transparency/visibility which signifies the amount of algae in the water. It was named after Fr. Angelo Secchi, advisor to the Pope. Fr. Secchi used it in the Mediterranean Sea in 1865. Now you know the rest of the story.

"A lake carries you into a recess of feeling, otherwise impenetrable."

—William Wordsworth

Good Lake Stewardship

Let's all pitch in to keep our lake clean!

- Never allow your campfire ashes to filter into the lake. An average bonfire produces enough phosphorous to significantly impact the lake. Phosphorous stimulates an over growth of algae and aquatic plants.
- LMBIA is responsible for a stretch of highway "clean up." But if you see trash along our lakes side roads or public boat landings please don't just get angry about the irresponsibility of others... grab a bag and do some pick up to keep our lake and surrounding area clean.
- Remember to take lake and yard weeds and leaves to the Litchfield Compost Site for disposal.

DNR Standard Survey and Ice Out Trap Netting Results

Submitted by Scott Mackenthun, Area Supervisor / Hutchinson Area Fisheries

Ice out trap netting for northern pike was completed in late March for Minnie-Belle. This is the fourth year that netting has been done since the special northern pike regulation took effect in 2003. It is also the fourth year that we've seen the intended result of the regulation, which was to increase the abundance of medium and large sized northern pike and decrease the abundance of small northern pike. Pre and post regulation data show shifts in the abundance of northern pike above 24, 30, 33, 35, and 36 inches, demonstrating the size structure shift to more medium and large sized pike. While Minnie-belle isn't likely to become a trophy northern pike destination with fish exceeding 40 inches because of diet limitations, it will give anglers an opportunity at the medium and large pike that it has historically produced. The special regulation is coming up for review in 2018; look for notification signs at the public accesses before the fishing opener in 2018 and an open house for public comment on the regulation in fall of 2018. I'm hoping to return to the Lake Association ahead of the public comment period to hear from lake association members discuss data for Minnie-Belle, what is in the literature and observed statewide for northern pike protective slot limits, and northern pike protective slot limit effects on both northern pike and the greater fish community. Thank you for your special regulation support to date.

As for the lake's larger fish community, we did wrap up standard test netting in early June. Fish communities can be variable from year to year, but Minnie-Belle has been surprisingly consistent. Walleye checked in at 5.3 fish per gill net, just a fraction of a fish down from where it was three years ago and very close to the historic median of 6.7. Northern pike came in at 10.9 fish per gill net, an abundant population for sure but with the benefit of some larger fish for anglers on account of the special regulation. Bluegill came in at 26.8 fish per trap net, right at the historic median of 22.6. Black crappies were low, 0.1 per gill net. That's off the mark of 0.4 in the historic median but not unlike most netting surveys on Minnie-Belle. Largemouth bass are sampled with electrofishing, where we caught 56 per hour of on-time. That's about right as the median is 53 per hour. Bass anglers love Minnie-Belle's vegetation and lagoons. Yellow bullheads came in at over 18 per gill net. Yellow bullheads are actually a good water quality indicator and have thrived, recently as well as historically, in Minnie-Belle. Other species observed include pumpkinseed, green sunfish, hybrid sunfish, brown bullhead, white sucker, and yellow perch. Overall survey results show a balanced fish community with excellent opportunities for largemouth bass, bluegill, walleye, and northern pike."

Swimmers Itch

It is typical to experience swimmer's itch in Minnesota lakes once the water temperature reaches about 70 degrees. The best hosts for these microscopic parasites in the area are native snails.

Swimmers Itch is a *temporary skin rash* that is caused by an allergic reaction to microscopic parasites that are carried by waterfowl, semi-aquatic mammals, and snails. As a part of their life cycle, these parasites are released by infected snails into the water, where they may come in contact with people and burrow into their skin. The itching and welts *are not caused by the organism living under your skin, but by an allergic reaction.*

Where does it come from?

The organism that causes swimmer's itch has a complicated life history.

1. It starts out as a worm (parasite) in the intestinal lining of aquatic birds and mammals (host).
2. The worms lay eggs inside the host animal.
3. The eggs are eliminated by the host and drop to the bottom of the lake.
4. Then the eggs hatch into *miracidia* that swim around in the water until they find a snail.
5. Once they find a snail, they live inside them and develop into *cercariae*.
6. The snails then release the cercariae back into the water where they look for another host – aquatic birds, mammals or humans.
7. When the cercariae find a potential host, they burrow into the host's skin.
8. If the host is suitable, the life cycle starts all over again.
9. *Humans are not a suitable host and the cercariae die after penetrating the skin.*

According to the Mayo Clinic, the uncomfortable symptoms of swimmer's itch can be relieved by over-the-counter antihistamines or anti-itch creams that contain calamine. Those affected by swimmer's itch are encouraged to avoid scratching the blemishes.

Depending on how many of the little parasites are out there, it could take a week or more to work it's way out of the system. Not everyone is sensitive to swimmer's itch but if it's something that bothers you, wait it out until the threat is over.

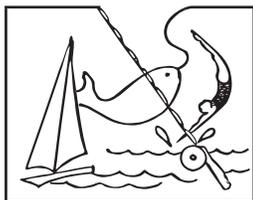


Bur Oak Blight

If you have an Oak tree that you believe has the symptoms of Bur Oak Blight now is the time to treat. The obvious symptoms will appear the end of July or early August when the leaves begin to wilt and drop prematurely. This is the tree's defense against the disease. Left untreated for too many years the tree will die.

Stockman's Greenhouse and Landscaping in Litchfield can be a resource for identification and treatment of Burr Oak Blight.





LAKE MINNIE BELLE
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION
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Check Us Out!

LMBIA website:
<https://sites.google.com/site/lmbiaorg>

LMBIA on facebook:
www.facebook.com/lmbia

DNR website:
www.dnr.state.mn.us

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Board meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except December), at the Bonfire Bar & Grill at 7:30 PM.

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