



# Website Initiative

Calling interested members  
to work on this project!

Dan Johnson

HFRLA's mission is to preserve and protect High-Fishtrap-Rush Lakes and surroundings which include the headwaters of the Manitowish River for today and for future generations.

The association will work to enhance the water quality, biological integrity, fishery, public recreation, boating safety, and aesthetic values of the HFR area.

### High/Fishtrap/Rush Lake Association

P.O. Box 122  
Boulder Junction, WI 54512

#### Board of Directors

Mark Lavin <i>President</i>	Gary Tielens <i>Vice President</i>
Dan Johnson <i>Treasurer</i>	Barb Wiesner <i>Secretary</i>

Bob Jenkins  
 Jim & Denise Johnson (shared)  
 Rich Mathias  
 Cathy & Alan McCully (shared)  
 Jim Merkowitz  
 Linda Pils

#### Committees

Membership & Communication/Education  
 Finances  
 Lakes Science  
 Land Use  
 Boating Safety & Access  
 Social

#### Membership Information

Annual membership dues are \$25 payable before the annual meeting (held the last weekend in June) each year. To apply for a new membership, please submit the information listed below with your \$25 annual dues payment to:

HFRL Lake Association  
 P.O. Box 122  
 Boulder Junction, WI 54512

#### Renewal notices are mailed annually in March. For new memberships:

Make checks payable to HFR Lake Association. Information to submit:

- permanent mailing address & lake address
- telephone number(s)
- seasonal telephone number
- e-mail address
- your interest in joining a committee or participating in activities

Newsletter – Leslie Gauberti

Website - Under construction

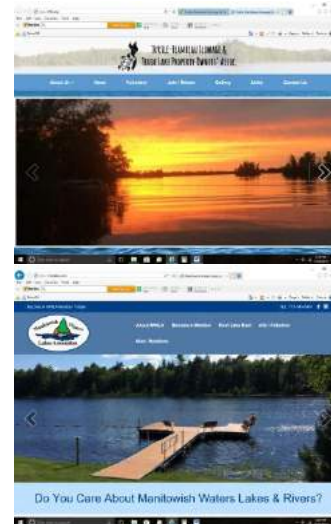
We are excited to report that your Board has approved moving forward on the development of an HFRLA website. Former board member Leslie Gauberti has introduced us to an individual, Scott Bertz of Manitowish Waters, with whom she worked on the creation of the Boulder Junction Community Foundation website. Scott has an extensive client portfolio, but loves working with local small businesses and not-for-profits on a very fee-friendly basis.

Jim and Denise Johnson were instrumental in creating our lake association Facebook page with hopes that it would be a great communication device for association activities. They quickly concluded that, while serving a purpose, it didn't meet the needs of telling our story and establishing a central repository for information about our assortment of activities and initiatives.

Scott Bertz (Web Work Life) assisted the Manitowish Waters Lakes Association, Oxbow Lake Association and the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage & Trude Lake Property Owners Association in building their respective websites. If you are interested, you can visit their pages to get some idea of what a final webpage might look like by using the following links:

[www.mwlakes.com](http://www.mwlakes.com), [www.tfftl.org](http://www.tfftl.org), and [www.oxbowlakepe.com](http://www.oxbowlakepe.com).

Our expected roll-out will be for the 2018 season on our lakes. We would love to have any tech-savvy or just plain interested members work with us on this important project. Feel free to contact Jim and Denise via email at [mullydj1@yahoo.com](mailto:mullydj1@yahoo.com) or myself at [dcjretired@hotmail.com](mailto:dcjretired@hotmail.com).



### Membership Renewal Notices to be Sent in March

The HFRLA will mail you a membership renewal notice, including a self-addressed stamped envelope, in March. This accomodates our volunteer Treasurer and Membership Chair's schedules.

However, if you have membership questions or changes to your contact information prior to the renewal mailing, please feel free to contact:

**Linda Pils at [lindapils@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lindapils@sbcglobal.net)**



## A Message from your President.....

I hope everyone experienced a wonderful summer and fall up North. Our association members continue to work on everyone's behalf to improve upon the important projects; Clean Boats, Clean Waters and dam monitoring, walleyes for tomorrow, HFRLA website initiative and many others. We all know this work cannot be accomplished without the volunteer assistance of many HFRLA members. I want to say thank you to all of you.

Also, I would like to welcome and thank Bob Jenkins, Rich Mathias, Barb Wiesner, Nicole Wilkins and Gary Tilden, and Alan and Cathy McCully for their willingness to serve as new HFRLA board members. This is a group of individuals who bring a vast amount of talent to support our HFRLA mission to preserve and protect our lakes.

Lately, I have been reading material about mindful awareness and many times my thoughts bring me back up North. For those quiet sunrises and sunsets, the sounds of the fall leaves swirling in the cool air, the brisk winter snow fall glistening in the sunlight, all moments of mindfulness to be cherished.

I wish you all a safe Holiday Season and a Happy New Year full of sparkling days. – Mark

## Treasurer's Report

Dan Johnson

At the 2017 annual meeting, you will recall that I sat in for our then Treasurer, Bill Daley, who was on one of his and Anne's many world travels. With Bill's decision not to stand for board re-election, I agreed to exchange my VP position for that of the treasurer.



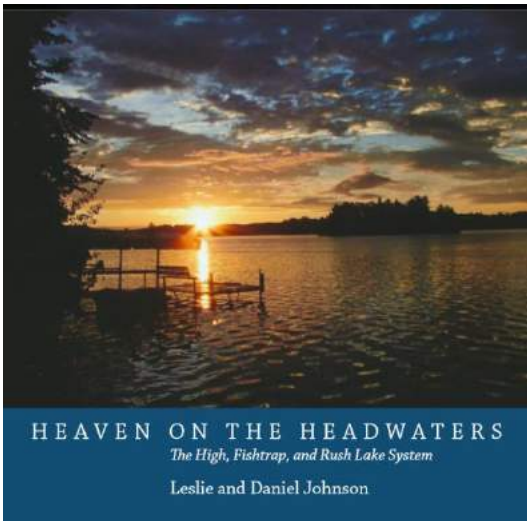
As of October 3, 2017 we had approximately \$9,100 in the bank, with remaining obligations to: White Water and Associates of \$2,500, and \$3,700 of production and mailing costs to Leslie and me on books distributed since July 31, 2017. By the end of November we should expect to receive final payments from the WIDNR of \$7,700 under Phase II of the lake planning grant and the grant covering 75% of the 200 hours of boat landing inspection provided under the Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program. This should put us in a strong financial position to allow us to expand our CBCW hours in 2018 to 300 hours and adequately fund our website and boat landing kiosk initiatives.

It is because of our member generosity that we are able to pursue these important programs and initiatives. Membership renewals will come out after the first of the year and your board hopes many of you will find the ability to "round-up" your remittance to provide additional financial resources to primarily support key activities of the comprehensive lake management plan.

## HFRLA Membership

Linda Pils

We have 89 members in the High-Fishtrap-Rush Lake Association this year. It is a slight drop from last year, resulting from moves, retirements, and several members who passed away during the year. But, even though we are smaller, we have a very generous group of members - half of our members added donations to their membership dues of \$25.00. The gifts to our lakes association went from an additional \$25.00 to an additional \$200.00. Thanks to every one of our members, every bit counts towards us being good stewards of our wonderful lakes, through education and supporting environmental practices to keep our lakes clean for all of us.



## “Heaven on the Headwaters” Update

Leslie Johnson

It has been almost a full year since 500 books arrived in our garage. Dan and I are very proud of the final product, and those of you who have spoken or written to us seem to feel the same way. As of this newsletter, we have distributed over 320 volumes, have recovered approximately 80% of the production cost and raised nearly \$900 for our Clean Boats Clean Waters program. Again, once costs are recovered, 100% of proceeds go directly to the Association.

The summer was very good to us, as the book was for sale in several places: Moondeer Gallery, McGann’s Wine Bar, Northern Highland Sports, the Boulder Junction library, and recently, Gooch’s A-1 Bar and Grill. These facilities sell the book for \$49.95, about \$5.00 more than through the Association. It was also on display at Camp Manito-wish and Dairymen’s Country Club, with instructions on how and where to purchase the book. We received telephone calls and emails from various and sundry people who had seen or heard about the book at a neighbor’s or a friend’s, which was so exciting because they seemed like gifts from *heaven*. Many people bought several books—one for each home or one for each family member or one for a friend, and, I think I mentioned in the last newsletter, I sold a book in my knitting store to be given as a birthday gift to a long-time Northwoods lover! Needless to say, we have been extremely thrilled and a bit surprised.

We have also noticed that there are several members of the Association who have not purchased a book, and we are hoping to encourage them to do so, perhaps even as Christmas gifts. By the way, the book would make a wonderful gift for anyone who has been to the Northwoods or is interested in history. There will be an inventory of volumes in Madison, Rockford, and Chicago/Milwaukee, so we hopefully can fill any orders without a shipping charge. Additionally, for those requiring it, we can ship up to three books in a USPS flat-rate box for \$13.60/box, and if you sweet-talk us, we might even personalize and gift-wrap them.

You may have seen an article in the Lakeland Times, written under the byline of “Fish Like a Girl”. Beckie Gaskill came to our house for an interview and we were excited to have a chance to be in the paper. Honestly, we were hoping for something that would have caught the reader’s eye a bit more, but we hope to try again for a more prominent space. We have entered into an independent book publishing contest, and if we win any award, we will contact the paper again next summer.

**Remember, there will be no second printing, so when these books are gone, you will have lost your chance! Let us know at [dcjretired@hotmail.com](mailto:dcjretired@hotmail.com) or just call at 847-926-4282.**

Thank you all for your terrific support—we so appreciate it!

Keeping you posted.....

### Board of Directors Officers

The officers of the Board of Directors for 2017-18 are:

Mark Lavin, President  
Dan Johnson, Treasurer

Gary Tielens, Vice President  
Barb Wiesner, Secretary

Board members are elected for 2 year terms; officers do not have term limits, but officer positions are reviewed annually.

**Thank you to our volunteers. We couldn’t do it without you!**





*Photo: Linda Pils*

The last sighting of loons counted 7 full-grown chicks on High Lake. It is amazing to think that all the adults have left, leaving only the chicks to fend for themselves to prepare and take the long journey south.

Fall departures are complicated affairs. In late August and early September young loons, ages 3-6 years, leave our northern lakes to head to the northeastern part of Lake Michigan. Next to leave are the territorial pairs that did not rear chicks or had an unsuccessful year of raising their young. This year, that group would include the Bear Island pair, who did not make a nest, and the Frog Island pair, who laid two eggs on the western part of Frog Island and abandoned that nest due to the lake fly infestation. On the second attempt, they sat on their nest of another two eggs, on the other end of Frog Island until about the day (28-30 day incubation) that the chicks should have hatched. But, there were no chicks. So, either the eggs were eaten by otters or raccoons, or the chicks did hatch and were quickly killed. It could have been caused by boats that were going too fast around the area (it was near the Fourth of July) or by predators such as muskies, northerns, snapping turtles, or. If anyone saw anything, I'd love to know what really happened, so please let me know.

The good news is that the Rush Lake pair also moved to escape the flies, but successfully raised two chicks, as did the Battleship Island pair. I know that I found two nests on Fishtrap, but do not know how many hatched or grew to that critical 8 weeks. After reaching 8 weeks old, the chances are 85% that the chick will grow to adulthood. Those hard working parents who successfully raised their chicks are the last adults to leave. All adults change into their far-less colorful, gray winter

plumage. Adults stay in Lake Michigan for 3-4 weeks eating and gaining the stamina needed to fly down to the Gulf of Mexico where they winter and feed about 50 miles out in the Gulf, between Tampa and Gulf Shores.

But, what of the chicks who are growing and strengthening their primary feathers with short flights around our lake area? They, mimicking the Packers, make a "Hail Mary" run, flying 3-400 miles at a stretch, usually at night, down to the Gulf. Imagine it, flying to a place that you do not know and with no directions. It is a mystery to us mere mortals! Luckily for us, they'll find their way back to the north woods next spring. Watch for them as soon as the ice starts to melt - the call of the loon won't be far behind.

PS: The Bear Island pair has not nested since the two trees fell down right by their nesting site. If anyone has a chance to rope up those trees and drag them away from the area on the Frog Island side of Bear, or saw them up so that loons can leave quickly, that would be greatly appreciated. It might be possible now or when there is ice on the lake.

## Update on our Comprehensive Lake Management Plan (CLMP)

Dan Johnson

On October 25, 2017, we received final approval from the WI DNR, authorizing payment of the hold-back on our \$25,000, Phase II grant. By the publication of this newsletter, we hope to have received the approximate \$6,000. Most of this amount will go towards settling our financial obligations with our plan consultant, White Water and Associates. Dean Premo and his staff deserve a hearty thank-you for a job well done, in addition to their patience in settling our accounts.

This fall and winter we will be laying out our plans for the up-coming five years. Some of this will involve updating our plant surveys on both High and Fishtrap lakes, as well as more aquatic invasive training and monitoring. A program that I have seen instituted by other lake associations is the concept of "adopt-a-shoreline". Much like adopt-a-highway programs, where individuals/institutions regularly monitor small sections of highway for trash and litter, this would distribute our invasive

species detection programs to 100, 200, or perhaps 500 foot lengths of shoreline by the local residents.

Our water quality and clarity testing will continue as in the past. We do, however, need a volunteer to take over the Fishtrap Lake activities, preferably someone that is close to a full-time resident. Samples are taken shortly after ice-out, twice during the summer months, and once in the late fall, requiring about an hours worth of time per sample.

More on the 2018 activities will appear in our spring 2018 newsletter.

## Boulder Junction Lakes Alliance Committee Dan Johnson

Perhaps many of you have been reading articles in the Lakeland Times regarding the formation of a town lakes committee. Richard (Dick) Jenks, a resident on Mann lake and a member of their small lake association, has been spear-heading this effort. The original concept was to create a town lakes committee that would be an official sub-committee of the town board of supervisors. All interested lake associations were invited to attend these organizational meetings.

The outgrowth of this initiative is best synthesized as follows:

- the lakes of our township are the most precious asset we all collectively have and they are the economic driver behind our community's success
- the town board of supervisors should be mindful that every lake, and their residents, may not have sufficient economic resources to deal with issues to properly maintain this asset
- the township has a budget for lakes improvement and perhaps could use some support level on how to best allocate such funds.

Strong views came out of the initial organizational meetings that this would be another layer of local government and possibly another layer of potential taxation. In order to gather the highest level of support for this effort, it was decided to make this committee entirely independent of the town board, much like an information exchange and lobbying organization, representing our township lakes.

The initial kick-off effort was to promote the idea of a town-wide implementation of the Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program. The concept would be for the town to apply for a grant from the WI DNR to cover 75% of the cost of a multiple lake, boat landing inspection program. I have been

actively involved in all meetings to date and will be monitoring this program and keeping our members informed of any successes.

(Note: the September 8, 2017 edition of the Lakeland Times has a comprehensive reporting on this subject)

## 2017 Annual Meeting Highlights



Photo: Leslie Gauberti

**Attendance:** Approximately 49 people

**Elections:** 4 Board members were elected unanimously: Bob Jenkins (High), Allen and Cathy McCully (shared-Fishtrap), Dan Johnson (Fishtrap), Nicole Wilkins and Gary Tilden (shared-At-Large), Barb Wiesner (At-Large), Rich Matthias (second year of vacant At-Large)

**Volunteer Recognitions:** Joanne Ader, Ken Wiesner, Bill Daley and Leslie Gauberti were thanked for their years of service to the board.

**Updates and Discussion Topics:** Membership update (90 members), HFRLA financial report, Walleyes For Tomorrow activities, "Clean Boats, Clean Waters" monitoring, High Lake boat landing information kiosk, water quality monitoring, "Heaven on the Headwaters" book completion and sales, Lake Planning Study grant progress, dam monitoring, invasive species, BJ Lakes Committee formation efforts, facebook, BJ road improvement project, loon report, and seasonal spearfishing.

**Guest Speaker:** Bryan Pierce, Executive Director of the Northwoods Land Trust, gave an excellent presentation on Land Trusts, property owner options for shoreland protection, the costs and tax benefits, and the ecological benefits of donating land to a land trust.

**9<sup>th</sup> annual potluck picnic was enjoyed by members.**

## BOAT LANDING WATERCRAFT INSPECTION

Ken Wiesner

We had our third successful season of boat landing inspections in 2017. As in the past, our inspectors were UW-Oshkosh environmental science interns. These Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) inspectors logged 207 hours and talked with 252 boaters about minimizing the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). 95 boats had never been contacted previously about AIS, while 157 boats had previous AIS contacts.

Under this program HFRLA only paid 25% of the \$3,434 total program costs. Since the interns were employed by UW-O we were not responsible for supervision and other personnel matters. The UW-O inspection program will be offered again in 2018, as will the cost-sharing grant from WI DNR.

Intern Dustin was our most frequent inspector. I stopped to talk with him frequently and always found him to be pleasant and knowledgeable. He said that he really enjoyed working at our landing.

**Great News for 2018.** We have recently learned that the Town of Boulder Junction will be applying for a CBCW grant that will include 200 hours of inspection work at our Hwy. B (High Lake) landing. The Town will also be paying for the local share (25%) of the inspection program costs. This means that HFRLA will not need to pay these costs directly. There are some decisions yet to be made regarding possible financial contributions to the Town from lakes to be covered by the Town program. It is expected that the contribution amount would not be more than the 25% we would otherwise have paid. The HFRLA Board will be making that decision later. One important benefit of having the Town run the program is being relieved of the administrative work for the DNR grant application and the UW-O contract.

There has been some discussion about increasing the inspection effort to 300 hours per year. A decision on that has not been made as of this date. More information on the Town inspection program will be in the spring newsletter.

### VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED!

We **are** in need of one or more Members to get seriously involved in continuing our Association's AIS work. When our Lake Plan is approved there most certainly will be tasks that will need to be taken care of if we are to meet our Prevention, Early Detection, or Rapid Response objectives. Planning and organizing Member workshops is another need if we are to continue these popular activities.

Contact Ken Wiesner (wiesnerk@msn.com), or any other HFRLA Board Member, if you are willing to help.



## Fishin' Tales

Gary Tielens: "Darn musky got my perch!"

Nicole Wilkin: "It was a lucky shot, but alas, the musky got away!"



# 2017 Water Report

Ken Wiesner

HFRLA volunteers Jim Merkowitz, Roger and Helen Larson, and Bob Hellyer monitored the water clarity, temperature, and chemistry for all of our lakes again in 2017. The Fishtrap Dam continues to be monitored by Greg Van Grinsven and Ken Wiesner.

Water clarity in both lakes was very good in 2017 with July/Aug reading averages of 14 feet in Fishtrap Lake and 13 feet in High Lake. Our volunteers extensively monitored both lakes for clarity again this year.

Both lakes also showed encouraging temperature profiles in 2017 with thermoclines present in Fishtrap Lake for data from June 4 through August 30. High Lake thermoclines were evident for data from June 27 through September 24. Thermoclines exist where cool bottom water temperatures in the low 50's (deg. F) are stable and at least 10 degrees cooler than surface temperatures. The lack of thermoclines (and generally warmer lake temperatures) during the 5-year drought from 2008 to 2013 likely contributed to decreasing Walleye populations and possibly to the nuisance growth of Southern Naiad.

Water chemistry data for High Lake showed slight improvement in phosphorus concentration, but readings continue to be very close to the limit of 20 ug/l where increases in algae growth are likely. Fishtrap Lake phosphorus levels are slightly lower. Recommended actions for minimizing lake phosphorus concentrations include:

- Maintain and do not disturb natural shorelines
- Create and maintain shoreland buffer areas with native plants
- Minimize stormwater runoff to the lakes, particularly in construction areas
- Maintain septic systems for peak effectiveness
- Do not use lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus

Our lake levels are a product of natural precipitation and management of flow through Fishtrap Dam. 2017 was our third successive year with excessively large precipitation events. Even with active management of dam flowrate the flowage/lake level has exceeded the 2.9" maximum allowed by state dam orders on several occasions – notably in late May and recently in October. Under normal weather conditions the summer level at the dam is roughly 3/4". (Our measuring point at the dam at 0.0" is 1638.50' above sea level.)

The high flow through the dam this year resulted in some damage to the rock spillway of the dam. More rock was added in October but heavy rain occurred before the rock was leveled resulting in a peak high flowage/lake level of 5.75" during a week where the level was 5" or more. The high flow and level exposed two leakage points at the dam. The dam was not in danger of failure at the time and no alert was issued. State engineers and their dam consultant examined the site during this event. Information gathered will be used in the ongoing evaluation of needed improvements to the 30+ year old dam system owned and operated by the State of Wisconsin.

The over-winter dam bypass setting will be the same as that used last winter, anticipating continued above normal flow. Any incidence of low water persisting in spring can be recovered by adjustment to the dam bypass after spring thaw.

Thanks to all our volunteers for their excellent water monitoring work.

## ALERT – Call for Volunteer Help!

We are in need of a volunteer to take over water quality and clarity testing for Fishtrap Lake in 2018 - four samples annually taking about 1 to 1.5 hours per sample. Contact Mark Lavin or Dan Johnson.





## 2017 Annual Meeting



*Photos: Leslie Gauberti*

"The happiest people I know are those that lose themselves in the service of others."

- Gordon B. Hinckley

*Happy & Safe Holidays, Everyone!*



*Photo: Denise Johnson*

- "Heaven on the Headwaters" Update
- Lake Planning Study Update
- Loon Ranger Report
- 2017 Water Report
- Annual Meeting Highlights