

# *Manitowoc County Lakes Association 2020 Summer Edition*



*Above, Pier installation at Carstens Lake*

*Right, new kiosks being installed at area lakes*



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## *Meeting Cancellations: MCLA's Response to Covid-19*

*The MCLA meetings were canceled in April and June.*

*The decision to hold a July or August meeting will be dependent on the opinion of our Lake Representatives and MCLA Board.*

*Watch for notices on our web site (<http://www.manitowoccountylakesassociation.org>) and local news releases.*

*The Manitowoc County fair has been canceled, hence MCLA will not staff a booth at the county fair.*

## ***From the Past President/President***

***By Tom Ward***

Welcome to our newsletter. It has been 2 years since our last publications. Due to the cancelations of so many events from Covid-19 we thought it important to educate and communicate thru old fashion hard copy. MCLA no longer has an AIS grant that helped fund previous editions, so you will see a shorter more abbreviated addition than in the past.



You will notice that I introduced myself with a double title. MCLA had elections last fall and I am happy to announce that we had volunteers step to serve as officers (see officer box) and individuals such as Hanna Edelglass to continue as our publicity chairperson, Dave Pozorski editor for this newsletter and membership, John Durbrow representative to the TMDL process and Gene Weyer leading our water quality monitoring. However no one was willing to step forward as President so I agreed to serve a 2 year term as past President leaving the Presidents position open for a volunteer and opportunity to work into the position.

Please read the section introducing a new AIS coordinator for this year and changes to the aquatic invasive species program. In 2018 Manitowoc County did not have an aquatic invasive species program or boat inspections. Glacierland RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development) received funding for 2019 thru June 2020 with a shared position with Sheboygan County staffed by Samantha Lammers. The AIS grant application for 2020 was not approved by DNR initially, unless Manitowoc County agreed to be the project sponsor. As a result of the project uncertainty Samantha took a position with Ozaukee and Washington County as an AIS coordinator.

Then along comes Covid-19 and our world changes and MCLA canceled the April meeting and all correspondence had to be conducted over the phone or electronically. A cloud of confusion still paralyzes the decision process and implementation of MCLA's planning goals from our December 2019 meeting. The MCLA Web site remains as our primary communication tool  
<http://www.manitowoccountylakesassociation.org>.

As we learn more about the virus and the process of its spread, I can't help to see the parallel to invasive species. It starts with a vector, with invasive species into Lake Michigan and its access to international shipping or boats coming from Indiana to Elkhart Lake with Eurasian Milfoil. Phragmites came to Green Bay through shipping from the East Coast where it first established. Look how quickly the Emerald Ash borer was spread thru Wisconsin by moving firewood.

Corvid-19 enters this country from international travel and out of country vacation and travel. Vectors become major international airports like New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. Then large population centers are like Ash Forests and the virus moves thru the population like a prairie fire. And finally like firewood movement small communities now become infested.

The response to Covid-19 was similar to responses to invasive species, underfunded, not taken seriously (until we see our own trees die) and then scramble to do something i.e. like efforts to control phragmites. Then we have landowners that "don't believe we have a problem or we will never be able to stop invasive phragmites or Eurasian milfoil, why clean my boat off". Maybe they could learn from our invasive species experience to fight Covid-19. Stay tuned, this will be a challenge for many organization to function effectively as this pandemic unravels.

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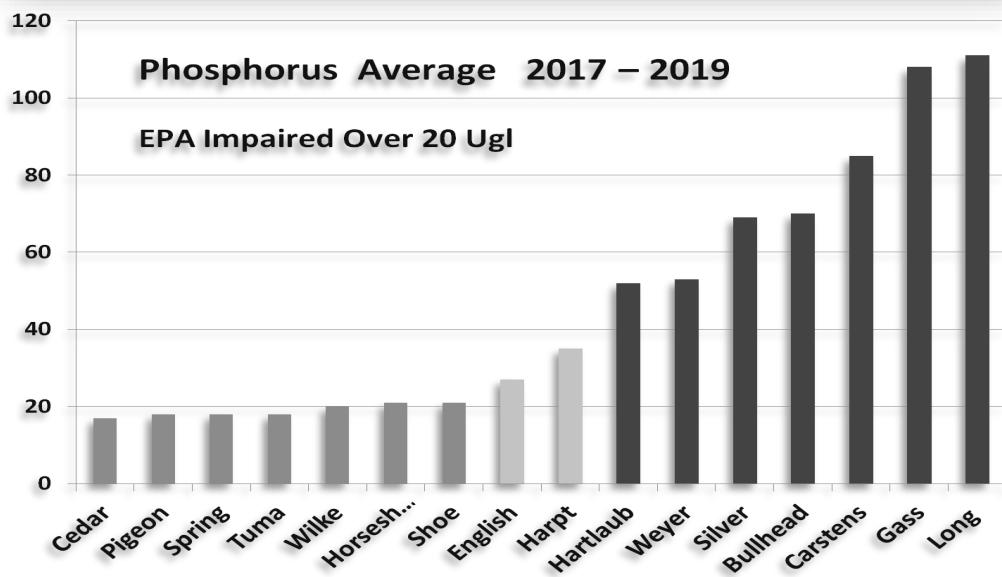
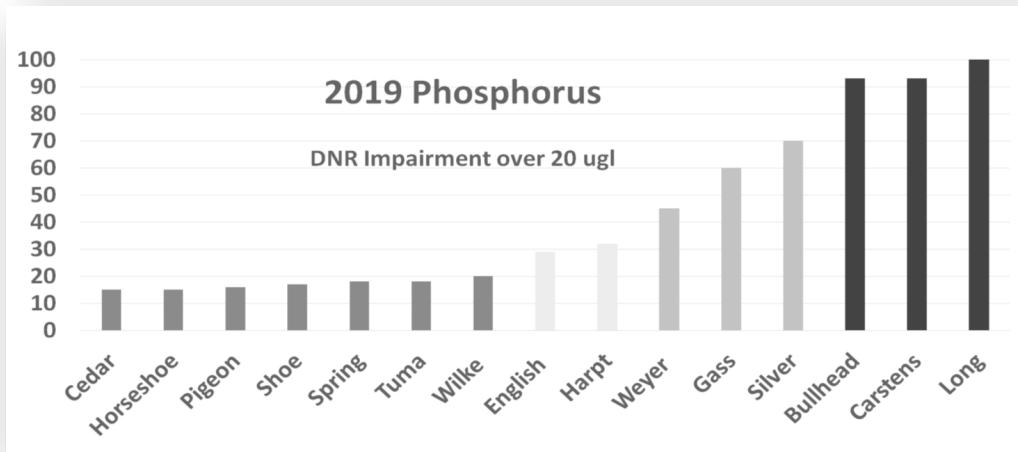
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## MCLA's Water Quality Monitoring

MCLA, with volunteers, continues to conduct annual testing of our County lakes if there is a volunteer monitor on the lake. Gene Weyer, past MCLA president, heads up our monitoring program and volunteers. He has been successful in securing funding and equipment to keep up the testing.

Volunteer monitors are needed to collect sample three times a year: you can contact Gene Weyer for more information (<gweyer45@gmail.com>) on becoming a monitor.

### Water Testing for 2020

The Wisconsin DNR stopped “Ice Out” water testing this year. This is very unfortunate because the early test is the best indicator of a lake’s true condition. We are hoping the State will fully open the lab and allow summer testing. Those tests begin in late June and must be complete by September 15<sup>th</sup>.

The testing program is a cooperative effort. The DNR provides funding and supplies, while the lake testing volunteers provide the effort and time. Together, they give you a view to your lake’s current condition and alert you to any major changes.



## Risks of Blue-green Algae

Blue-green algae are photosynthetic bacteria known as cyanobacteria and are a natural part of water bodies in Wisconsin. With enough sunlight and nutrients, cyanobacteria can grow to high levels and form blue-green algae bloom. Blooms are often smelly, look like spilled paint or pea soup, and can change the color of the water to green, blue, turquoise, purple, tan, or white. Some blooms form a layer of scum or mats on the surface of the water.

Blue-green algae blooms can produce toxins, called cyanotoxins. Cyanotoxins can make people and animals sick after they swallow, breathe in, or have contact with the water. Many dogs have become sick and some have even died after swallowing water containing cyanotoxins.

Pets are especially susceptible to blue-green algae because they don't naturally avoid smelly, green water. Because of their relatively small size, animals do not need to ingest very much tainted water to become ill. Many dogs have gotten sick and some have died as a result of drinking water experiencing an algal bloom or licking their fur after swimming in algae-filled waters.

When dogs swim and play in water, they tend to swallow water. Because dogs have smaller bodies, they can get sick after swallowing just a little bit of unsafe water.

**If you think you are experiencing symptoms** related to exposure to blue-green algae (e.g., stomach cramps, diarrhea, vomiting, headache, fever, muscle weakness, difficulty breathing), contact your doctor or the Wisconsin Poison Center (800-222-1222) right away.

**If your pet displays symptoms** such as seizures, vomiting, or diarrhea after contact with surface water, contact your veterinarian right away.

To report an algae bloom email  
[DNRHABS@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRHABS@wisconsin.gov).

Include the bloom size, duration, and location with water body name, town name, and county name. Please submit photos for verification including close-ups and overall views.

Most local health departments in Wisconsin and Manitowoc County do not have the capacity to monitor blue-green algae toxins at public beaches, so treat any accumulation of blue-green algae with caution. When in doubt, stay out!

## Results of the MCLA Membership Survey December 5, 2019

Last December we conducted a survey of our membership both on line and for those in attendance at the meeting by answering the following questions. The following are high points of those discussions.

### 1. What would you like MCLA to program for next year (2020)?

- Positive and negative effects of herbicides, we discourage lawns what about use in lakes.
- We have data on lakes concerning phosphorus. How can lakes with high phosphorus be helped? How do herbicides affect lakes?
- Have a lake host meeting. Start the meeting with pulling some weeds and show and tell.
- Fish Manager and Zoning Administrator
- AIS training ID, or CBCW, shoreline erosion control Monitor results and Fish Managers visions

### 2. What role do you think MCLA could play in helping other lakes such as Gass, Bullhead and Carstens?

- Just sharing info from other area lakes to learn and understand what they can do. Trials and tributes that all land-owners are going thru helps everyone know how to better things.
- Help sponsor grants
- Fund raising ideas and how to get more people involved
- Networking, how to apply for grants, where can we get money?
- Keep information flowing awareness.
- Sponsor grants, offer meeting space, fund space etc. ; help facilitate plans once approved. \
- Assist in fund raising, sponsor grant, assist in grant preparation, project management guidance

### 3. Should MCLA be more politically active with legislation local or State level?

- Most of the respondents were no unless at the local (Town or County level) or there is a strong consensus with a position.

### 4. Should MCLA sponsor more social activities? If yes what are they?

- Meet at various lakes with a host Lake.
- Yes, have a meeting or two at a bar/restaurant
- Yes , social hour or golf outing
- Yes, could be fund raising opportunity as well, golfing picnic etc.
- Yes, have a meeting at Cedar Lake pavilion in June with pontoon tour maybe Wilke lake.

***Remember  
Volunteering is not a spectator sport***

# From the Valders Journal

## Thursday October 24, 2019:

### Water Warning

George Meyer, executive director of Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and former secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources, spoke to the Manitowoc County Lakes Association on Friday in St. Nazianz. He highlighted growing problems with lake water quality.

By Todd S. Bergmann

Wisconsin waters are getting worse, after decades of improvement.

George Meyer, executive director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and former secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources, talked about that disturbing trend in water quality at the annual meeting of the Manitowoc County Lakes Association at Meat's Opera Haus in St. Nazianz on Friday night.

"With the current policies that are in place in this state and the current programs, we will never, ever reach water quality standards in our lakes and streams in this state," he said. "It is technically and physically impossible."

While state and federal programs reduced pollution from industry and sewer treatment plans, Meyer said runoff from farms and streets continues to contaminate ground and surface waters.

"We have put hundreds of millions of dollars into the program," he said. "We are going backwards on many of our waters."

- Bullhead Lake near Collins is suffering from a glut of phosphorous, added Tom Ward, president of the Manitowoc County Lakes Association.
- "The fish are not what they used to be," he said.
- That lake will have to undergo an expensive alum treatment, Ward said.
- The state needs an effective program to reduce phosphorous and nutrients in waters, Meyer said.
- "It is time to stop saying, 'We're going to get there' if we are not going to get there," he said.
- Wisconsin will have to require farmers to develop and follow a nutrient management plan and provide funding to cover costs, Meyer said.
- "I get it," he said. "Farmers don't like regulation."
- When he was growing up on a farm just west of New Holstein, Meyer said, his father demonstrated conservation by example.
- "Dad and all the neighbors were really good farm operators," he said. "They really respected the land and were stewards. They did not use words like 'the environment.' We did not know what that was."
- "They took care of the land. They were careful on how they used chemicals."
- While he was attending St. Norbert College in De Pere in the 1960s, students often went into the Fox River, Meyer said.
- "If you went in that river...you either had an ear infection or a rash," he said. "It was contaminated. There were 10 paper mills upstream."
- The river contained carp but no game fish, Meyer said.

- At the same time, he said paper mills discharged so much sulfur and mercury in the Wisconsin River that no one could eat fish from it.
- In the past 50 years, Meyer said the quality of the Fox River has improved.
- "Now, it is a world-class walleye fishery," he said.
- After St. Norbert, Meyer attended law school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and worked part time as a law clerk for the DNR.
- During this time, Congress passed the Clean Water Act, which required states to implement a permit process to make waters fishable and swimmable by 1983, Meyer said.
- "They needed lawyers to do the work," he said.
- After graduation from law school, Meyer got a job as a DNR lawyer.
- Before the Clean Water Act, many municipalities merely had primary treatment to catch the big stuff before sewage went in the water, Meyer said.
- The act added secondary treatment to keep bacteria out of the water in the 1970s and tertiary treatment to keep phosphorous out of the water in the 1980s, he said.
- The state spent \$3 billion to help municipalities clean wastewater they discharged into streams and lakes, Meyer said.
- With the federal act, he said paper mills could no longer threaten to leave Wisconsin because they would have to meet the same pollution standards in other states.
- After industry and municipalities reduced contamination, Meyer said it still flows off farmlands and streets, beyond state control.
- "We knew it would not be as easy," he said. "There is no way of actually forcing it to happen."
- A \$200 fine for killing fish did little good, Meyer said.
- Farm runoff not only kills fish in streams, but also contaminates well water, he said.
- People across the state complain at meetings about bad water in their wells, Meyer noted.
- "It is tough to drill a new well and have the second well contaminated after a short time," he said. "They cannot sell their homes. It is pretty hard to sell a house with a bad well."
- New wells and current programs will not end the problem, Meyer said, adding that the state needs a stricter requirement to reduce phosphorus and nitrate runoff from farms.
- State law requires farmers do certain things, such as store manure away from streams, and promised 70% state funding, while the Legislature appropriated only a small portion, Meyer said.
- "We still end up with phosphorous and nitrogen coming off the land," he said. "In most bodies of water, we are going backwards in terms of runoff."
- The only requirement for farmers to do anything to reduce runoff, normally through nutrient management plans, applies to a minority of farmers in federal programs, Meyer said.
- "Farmers can develop a nutrient management plan on how much nutrients they can put on the land, how they are applied, when they are applied, so they do not run off into lakes and streams," he said.

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## **Manitowoc County Lake Association Reports**

### **Cedar Lake:**

A Johnboat with 3 boaters capsized this spring. The three were rescued but the boat and motor has yet to be recovered. Skin Divers were used in an attempt to recover it. It should be noted that skin diving during fast boating hours on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays is unlawful by Town Ordinance on Wilke and Cedar Lake.

Weekend boat traffic is up and fines for illegal trailer parking are being enforced. Lighting has been added to the parking and ramp areas. A Rain Garden is anticipated to be planted by the Parking Area.

Cold water temp had delayed the spawn.

Unlike in previous years, the DNR did not request that water quality samples be taken this year. Secchi disk readings have dropped from 14.9 feet May 1st to 7.8 feet on May 14th. We have seen dramatic drops like this in the past only to improve with a couple of weeks.

Eurasian Water Milfoil herbicide treatment is anticipated again in spots this summer.

USCG annual boat inspections have been canceled by the USCG.

### **Bullhead Lake:**

We continue with our alum feasibility study grant, although our consulting firm is not recommending an alum treatment at this time. Watershed modeling indicated it could be the record precipitation contributing most of the growing season phosphorous and not internal loading. Data collection will continue for about 3 more years and then modeling can be completed again. Unfortunately we could not collect early spring data because of the DNR moratorium on sample processing.

Lake is already experiencing significant algae growth and we have a tremendous number of snails as well. Boat cleaning station is stocked with bleach sprayer and brushes to hopefully prevent spread of snails to other lakes.

### **Hartlaub Lake Report:**

Manitowoc County Fish and Game stocked over 100 eight inch walleyes in late 2019. The forage base in Hartlaub is made up of small bluegills. While bluegills might not be a preferred food source for walleyes, the walleyes should grow nicely and hit the size limit in a couple of years.

The percentage of fisherman that use kayaks continues to grow. They now outnumber traditional boats on Hartlaub. Putting the kayaks on the top of a car or in the back of the pickup, makes it much easier to control invasives since there is no trailer involved.

A loosely formed kayak club is targeting bass for catch and release. The same bass are caught multiple times. One fisherman is even punching a small hole in one of the fins each time he catches it.

Water quality remains about the same as it was 10 years ago. No better. No worse. Invasive species continue to be present, but not prevalent.

### **Pigeon Lake:**

Pigeon Lake had a whole lake chemical treatment the spring of 2017 to help eliminate 6 acres of Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in the lake. Lake surveys showed no EWM in 2017 after the treatment, none 2018 and 1 clump in 2019 that was promptly removed by skin divers. Pigeon Lake is starting the 2020 summer season EWM free for the 4th year. We plan 3 lake surveys this summer, 2 with our volunteers and 1 by Onterra in early August. If any colonies of EWM are detected from the surveys we'll hire the skin divers again in September to remove.

#### Lake water quality averages for the summer 2019:

Secchi Depth = 8.2 (10.0 high - 4.5 low)

Chlorophyll = 8.3 (17.8 high - 3.48 low)

Total Phosphorus = 16.7 (24.4 high - 14.1 low)

We have been taking lake water quality readings since 1994

Stocking 2,000 walleye this fall from the public boat landing

Holding a fishing derby for 2 age groups Sunday, September 27th at Camp Sinawa - is always well attended

We will again be promoting the DNR's Clean Boats Clean Water program at the public boat landing this summer. We have over 70 volunteers who participate and have been doing this since our lake treatment in 2017.

### **Silver Lake:**

A 6 ½ inch rain caused an overflow from Silver Creek into the lake over the dike. Lake was pretty high but is coming down, water is clearing up. Some fishing, lots of pike and bass. Some of the old or damaged trees will be taken down in the Park.

(Continued from page 6)

### **Water Warning**

By Todd S. Bergmann

- Only 37% of Wisconsin farmers have a nutrient management plan and of those not all are following them, Meyer said.
- “We’ve got to get serious about this,” he stressed.
- To eliminate the economic burden on farmers, Meyer proposed 100% government funding of nutrient management costs.
- The cost of reducing farm runoff is much less than this nation spent cleaning up sewer discharge years ago, he said.
- “You ask a logical question,” Meyer said. “Where is that money going to come from?”
- People and politicians in Wisconsin do not want to raise taxes.
- “It is just a matter of political will and setting priorities,” he said. “We’re doing this for our grandkids.”
- Meyer’s solution is to dedicate the \$98 million of annual state sales tax revenue on firearms, ammunition, fishing supplies, boats and binoculars to solving the problem.
- “I have friends who hike and bike in the outdoors,” he said. “They are very willing to pay money for conservation.”



**John Durbrow was presented with Lake Stewardship** at the MCLA annual banquet on October 18, 2019, was presented the award for his work in support of Manitowoc County lakes. John developed our MCLA Web site, obtained a grant to study the impact of water clarity on home prices in Manitowoc and surrounding counties; helped MCLA to host educational topics expanding the membership's understanding and knowledge of lake issues.



**Steve Hogler DNR area Fish Manager retired at the end of 2019.** Steve had served as fish manager for our county for many decades and annually presented their lake survey results at our MCLA meetings. As of this publication DNR has not filled the position.

At the MCLA Annual Banquet in St, Nazianz, MCLA members were privileged to hear a talk by guest speaker George Meyer. George Meyer is the former Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF). Valders Journal Reporter Todd S. Bergmann covered the event in his October 24, 2019 article, check it out on the MCLA web page.

## **Why Boards Fail**

There are several common reasons why boards fail. Taken together, they provide a checklist for evaluating your own organization's board and its problem areas. Looking at the reasons why boards fail can be the first step in revitalizing your board. Let's take a look at some of them.

- **Boards fail** because of an ineffective nominating committee. Some consistently fail to realize that decisions made by the nominating committee will largely determine who will lead the group in the years ahead. This committee should be well organized, have a time schedule and clear working procedures. Often this is completely lacking.
- **Boards fail** because members do not have a good understanding of the organization and what their role is. This can happen when the nominating committee does not clearly communicate to potential board members what their responsibilities will be.
- **Boards fail** because they have no planned rotation of members. If the same people serve year after year, there is no way for new blood and new ideas to come onto the board. Despite their dedication, these same people will make the organization a "closed corporation." Rotation prevents the ingrown possessiveness sometimes found on self-perpetuating boards.
- **Boards fail** when they have no way of eliminating non-productive members.
- **Boards sometimes fail** because they are too small. It is hard to conceive of a board getting the job done if it is simply too small.
- **Boards fail** because they have no well-planned orientation for new and old members. Deliberate thought is rarely given to the matter of blending new and old board members onto a well-functioning team.
- **Boards fail** when they have no long service delivery and financial development plan. Often boards are not looking at the long term needs of the organization and development plans to meet those needs.

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*The Manitowoc County Lakes Association  
will protect and enhance the quality of area  
lakes and watersheds for the benefit of all."*

**JOIN  
TODAY!**