



November 2016

Lake Eau Claire Association

P.O. Box 229

Augusta, WI 54722

www.lakeeauclaire.org

LakeECAssociation@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

As I write this, my first President's article, I am sitting watching the fall landscape from my patio. What a gorgeous view. I am reminded of how truly lucky I am, we all are, to have such an incredible waterway in front of us. As I look back at all the things that happened in 2016, it reminds me of the great work we are doing to preserve our lake as well as the work we have in front of us.

In 2016, many incredible things took place. We established a new sponsorship program that allowed businesses to advertise while raising funds for our ongoing lake improvement efforts; we placed 32 more fish cribs into the lake which now gives us over 300 fish cribs and tree falls, we increased our awareness through our Facebook page; we held two successful clothing sale drives; we cleaned four of the five sand traps; the Lake District requested a \$100,000 grant from Eau Claire County; we continued aerating the lake which is generating great results; and many more things which are just too great to mention.

In September we survived another historic flood. Waters rose to 11 feet over normal height! It was really great to see people come together to assist and help out others in need! We have a really great lake community!

Unfortunately the flood of 2016 will have caused quite a bit of sand flow into our lake and we will have to start considering and preparing for another trap cleanout, which of course costs a lot of money. There is just so much to be done to preserve this beautiful waterway we call Lake Eau Claire.

I would like to thank our former President and Vice President, Fred Poss and Vicki Reed for serving in these roles so effectively. I'm excited about my new role as President and I truly hope I can continue the excellent service those before me have given in this role. I'm anxious to get more people involved. All of the great things that are happening must be done as a group effort. A handful of people cannot accomplish all that we have to do, we need many! I hope over the coming year I am able to meet each and every one of you and you all are able to get involved in some way, small or large!



Save the Dates!

Don't forget to save the following dates:

Holiday Party – Saturday, January 14, 2017

Lake Eau Claire Ice Fisheree – Saturday, February 4, 2017

Triathlon/Fundraiser – Saturday, June 10, 2017

4th of July Fireworks – Sunday, July 2, 2017

Golf Outing – Saturday, July 22, 2017

MAKE RESERVATIONS TO THE 2017 HOLIDAY PARTY!



WHAT: Lake Eau Claire Association Annual Holiday Party

WHERE: Lion's Hall, Main St., Augusta

WHEN: Saturday, January 14, 2017

5 PM Social, 6:30 PM Dinner

COST: \$20 Per Person

RSVP: Due by January 7th to either Vicki Reed at reedvf@uwec.edu, 715.379.0020 or

Lori Bechtel at lbechtel@sajan.com 612.991.8331

MENU: TBD

DRINKS: Available for purchase



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Lake Eau Claire Warning Siren Update by Lauren Lea

Fundraising efforts for the Lake Eau Claire Emergency Siren project kicked off in August and have been going strong ever since. To date, more than \$22,000 from 77 local businesses, municipalities, organizations and citizens have been pledged to the project. A little less than half of all money pledged has come from local landowners on and around the lake! This demonstration of support has been amazing.

Lauren has traveled to several meetings and events in the Chippewa Valley to promote her project. She recently gave an update to the Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Great Lakes leaders in Eau Claire and they were so inspired by her effort that they offered a donation. Recent donations also came in from the Augusta Lion's Club, the Fall Creek Fire Department and the Augusta Sportsman's Club. Lauren will be making appearances at additional events, including the Augusta Sportsman's Club Dinner and Raffle in November in an effort to raise additional funds.



WEAU News 13 in Eau Claire conducted an interview with Lauren in September. Shortly after the story aired, two additional siren companies asked to submit proposals and bids for the project. After review, the Town of Ludington selected a siren to purchase. Lauren is working closely with township officials to facilitate the purchase and installation. Of note, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative has offered to do an in-kind donation of staff and equipment to assist with the installation, and have offered the pole for the siren at cost.

Fundraising will close as planned on January 31, 2017, so plan to get your donation to the project in as soon as possible. Please take a few minutes to thank the following businesses and organizations for their support.

Alternative Resource Management
Badger Basement Systems Inc.
Esser Insurance Agency, LLC
Phil's Septic Service
Sandy Hill Campground
Shopko
VFW Post 8478 (Augusta)

American Legion
Augusta Area AARP
Augusta Lions Club
Augusta Sportsman's Club
Augusta-Bridge Creek Fire & Rescue
Fall Creek Fire Department

Lake District News *by Marlo Orth*

On November 9, 2016 at 7 PM the Eau Claire County board will be holding a listening session on their budget for 2017 in the county board room. The county board room is directly across from the main entrance of the Court House. Currently they have \$75,000 designated for Lake Eau Claire. I plan on speaking, thanking them and emphasizing how important the county support is and how everything we do, benefits everyone. I would like everyone who is able to attend this session to do so and I will ask you to stand to indicate your support (and save them time by not every person speaking). However, anyone who wishes to speak, please do so.

January and February 2016 we cleaned out Troubled Waters Bridge Trap (TWBT) and Gravel Pit Trap (GPT). We took 14,859 cu. yds. out of TWBT at a cost of \$137,724 and 9,096 cu. yds. out of GPT at a cost of \$48,438. With all the flood events we have had, both traps need to be cleaned again. We had money carried forward from prior year to assist us being able to afford paying \$186,162. Another big expense we have is the aeration system; it costs us about \$80.00 per day just for electricity. As a result our treasury is nearly depleted.

Both traps should be cleaned again, however we do not have sufficient funds. We are going to have to prioritize what we do and where we do it. We will only have about \$50,000 available to do dredging in January-February 2017.

You probably noticed that dredging at GPT is about half what it costs at TWBT. Two main factors are responsible for this. 1. The distance from the trap to the deposit site. 2. At TWBT it is more difficult for the crane to operate.

We are trying to secure a new deposit site near TWBT. Thus far two different sites have been ruled out as not suitable (because of wet land issues). Currently working on a third site.

Lastly I want to thank everyone who has contributed in any way to improve Lake Eau Claire. You are making a difference.

Marlo A. Orth, Chairman - Lake Eau Claire Protection & Rehabilitation District

Membership Update!



Starting in 2017, membership for the Lake Eau Claire Association will increase to **\$25 per year**. In addition to all that the Lake Association provides today, Lake Association members will now have the opportunity to be enrolled in a texting service that we can utilize during emergency situations. Given the flooding that occurred in September, we believe we need multiple options for notifying people of emergency situations and important announcements. This service will **ONLY** be available to members who are up-to-date on their membership dues. You can renew your membership or join today by going to the following link, <https://www.memberplanet.com/lakeeauclaireassociation>, click the “Join our group” button and fill out the form to “Create an account”. You can also join by mailing your payment to:

Lake Eau Claire Association P.O. Box 229 Augusta, WI 54722.



This year, the Lake Association introduced a new format where sponsors could choose to become a sponsor at the Muskie, Northern, Walleye or Panfish level. We are very fortunate that over 25 businesses chose to take part in this opportunity and we appreciate all of the support we receive from our sponsors. As you browse through our newsletter, you will see logo's for various businesses included in the news portion of our newsletter; those businesses sponsored at the Muskie level. At the end of our newsletter, you'll find a listing of all our Northern, Walleye and Panfish sponsors. When you get the chance, please take a minute to thank our sponsors for their support!

If you are interested in being a 2017 Lake Eau Claire Association sponsor and would like to pre-pay yet this year, please send an email to LakeECAssociation@gmail.com.

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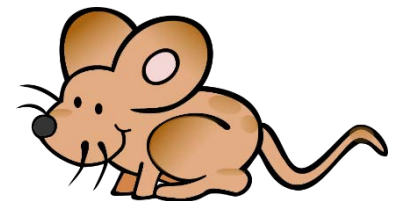
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It's Time to Winterize and Critterize!

If your cottage is one of the many that gets closed up in the fall in anticipation of winter, don't forget to "Critterize" your cottage at the same time! If you don't, you could have an unwelcome surprise when you return in the spring. You might have mouse droppings on the counter and in the pantry, chewed open flour or sugar packages, furniture shredded by squirrels, sooty raccoon footprints on the beds, rugs, and curtains, maybe the electrical wires shorted out by mice that just love to chew stuff, or the handfuls of acorns stored everywhere. *Wondering How??*

Step 1 is to Keep Them Out!

- **Check and seal all outside doors** - there must not be any space below or above the door greater than ¼ inch. If those spaces exist, shut off the mouse highway by installing a door sweep (metal strip with flexible plastic skirt) you can screw on the bottom of a door and screw or glue a thin strip of wood the width and length of the door on top of the door to keep out the climbers.



- **Check and seal the exterior perimeter of the cottage** - all walls where they meet in corners, or with soffits and eaves, must be tight with no gaps.
- **Seal openings around all pipes** - hot and cold water pipes and waste water pipes for showers, sinks, and toilets come in through holes in walls and floors and usually the holes are large enough for mice, rats, and chipmunks.
- **Chimneys and vent pipes** - chimneys for fireplaces, stoves, and gas water heaters are almost never critter-proofed. If chimneys have dampers that close completely, make sure they are closed tightly. Better to screen chimneys at the top, or have covers installed that can be raised/ lowered in the chimney for fires. Any gas water heater, or gas furnace will have a round chimney to vent combustion gases and the installing contractors *never* screen them. Make sure they are screened with 1/8 inch hardware cloth. And those vents for your toilet plumbing that come out through the roof...rats love to dive down them and swim up through the trap in your toilet.
- **Crawl spaces** - Very cozy winter retreats for possums, rats, raccoons that also love to nest, urinate, and defecate in the insulation under the floor boards. Make sure all access doors are secured with a padlock so no one can open the door and leave it open. Make sure all windows or other openings are tightly closed. Look for cracks from outside (light will shine in) and seal them from the inside.

Step 2 is to Eliminate the Attraction!

- Never store any food of any kinds in cottages over the winter unless they are in cans or bottles.

Step 3 is to Get the Tricky Ones!

- Sometimes when critterizing, you may actually trap animals inside your cottage and there are those persistent critters that find their way past your efforts:
 - Trap them - bait mouse snap traps (wooden Victor traps are best) with a combination of 1/3 peanut butter, 1/3 oatmeal, and 1/3 bacon grease. Place traps on floors next to walls in all rooms with 2 in the kitchen. If possible, have a neighbor check the traps a couple times each month to remove dead mice and rebait traps. If there is an attic, place a few traps up there.
 - Bait them - DO NOT put poison baits inside the cottage. Rats/mice may die inside walls and smell really bad. Grandkids and pets may also find the baits. Place poison baits in crawl spaces under the cottage.

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Boats - make sure boats are covered securely around sides of boat and store them inside, if possible. If there are holes in the cover around cleats or rings they must be covered tightly—sew a cloth flap over the opening(s) or secure them with snaps.



**Thank you for another
successful Lake Eau Claire
Association clothing sale!
It's great to see everyone
proudly promoting Lake Eau Claire!**




Fish Crib Update by Dale Zank

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help build and place an additional 16 fish cribs on September 10th! We had about a dozen people help that morning building and setting the cribs. A special thanks to Kenny Zich (BZ Trucking) for hauling the logs free of charge and Kory Berlin and his son Kyle for providing the skid steer and loading the cribs onto the pontoon (on very short notice...)! Larry Comstock provided the pine limbs



with help from a number of people in cutting and loading. Rod Zika provided the GPS coordinates in placing the cribs. Be sure and thank these guys if you see them! Now with the second pontoon set up correctly and with rollers on both pontoons, the drops went very well. We were done in less than 2 1/2 hours from building to placement! For those keeping track, we've now placed **over 300** fish cribs and tree falls. We are seeing great results in bait fish growth. Let's keep up the good work and thanks for all the help.

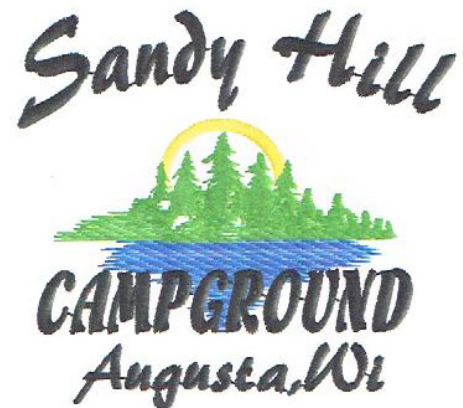


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MAKE A DONATION

Did you know...

Donations to the Lake Eau Claire Association are Tax Deductible!!

Consider making a donation today! 100% of all donations go directly to the improvements of the lake.

Nature Notes - Wisconsin Snakes *by Mike Harden*

During my life as a biology teacher and naturalist, some of the most common questions I have ever had to deal with have had to do with our local snakes. Snakes have had a bad rap with the general public ever since the biblical account of Eve being tempted by Satan in the form of a serpent. One must wonder what our views would be if Old Nick had been portrayed as maybe a kitten, or perhaps a koala or other such critter. Our views of our serpentine friends would likely be much different.

Wisconsin is home to about 22 species of snakes, two of which are poisonous, and 14 of which are rare, threatened, or endangered species. In all my 60 or so years of hunting, fishing, and hiking the wilds of Eau Claire Co., I have yet to encounter and actually see a rattlesnake. I do recall, as a child, that my Grandfather; Bill Harke, a farmer in the Rodell area, used to have a Band - Aid can in which he had several "rattles" which he said he had collected from snakes he had killed on the farm. It was a source of intense interest to us kids. The last snake rattlesnake I remember being reliably reported in our county was back in the 60's, when a woman east of Augusta killed one with a hoe in her yard. That was a massasauga or "swamp" rattlesnake, now an endangered species in the state, and is to be found further south in parts of central Wis., and in the river bottoms of the Black and Mississippi rivers. The larger timber rattlesnake is a protected species found in the bluff country along the Mississippi and the lower reaches of the Wisconsin River in southwest Wis. It would be very highly improbable (but not impossible) to ever encounter a rattlesnake in our immediate area. Also, there are no water moccasins in Wisconsin. The snake one sometimes sees basking on a stump in the upper end of the lake or sunning itself on a branch or sandy spot in the troubled waters area would be a northern water snake; a nonpoisonous species that lives on fish, crayfish, and amphibians. A couple of summers ago, I had the good fortune to see one by my dock. I tried to catch it, but they are elusive, fast swimmers. So, there are no real concerns to harbor about encountering a venomous snake in our area.

The snakes that we do commonly encounter are strictly harmless, and, in fact, largely beneficial. The western fox snake (often mistakenly called a "pine snake") is a great rodent controller, and is thus sometimes found in garages, sheds, or boathouses because that is where the mice are. When encountered, it sometimes vibrates its tail in a manner like that of a rattlesnake. If the tail happens to be hitting a dry oak leaf, it can be a quite unnerving encounter. Other common snakes of our area are the garter snake, the red - bellied snake, the eastern hognose snake, and the smooth green snake. Finding a hognose is a special treat. When disturbed, they will rise up like a cobra, puff up their neck, hiss loudly, and even roll over and play dead. It is quite a show. Our largest snake in the area is our bull snake. Sometimes reaching 7 ft. in length they are the largest snake in our area. They are great rodent catchers, and are protected as a valuable species.

I am sorry that my space is limited, as these creatures are a fascinating part of our local fauna. The next time you encounter one of these remarkable critters, remember that the possibility of them being a threat to you is virtually nonexistent, and that they are to be observed, studied, and protected for the value that they are to the web of life of our lake's ecosystem.

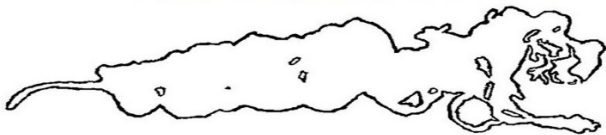




Lake Eau Claire window decals still available!

Window Decals are a simple and visible way to show your support for Lake Eau Claire. They look great on vehicles, boats or anywhere stickers can be applied! They are available for purchase at The Woodland for just \$5.

Lake Eau Claire Ice Fisheree



Lake Eau Claire Association Officers

President - Lori Bechtel, N8043 980th St., River Falls 54022 612.991.8331 lbechtel@comcast.net

Vice-President - Duane Ives, 1505 Centennial Pkwy, Waunakee 53597 608.444.0380 dives@amfam.com

Treasurer - Dean Boehne, 512 5th Ave. N., Strum 54770 715.695.3131 dcbost@trivest.net

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Phone 715-577-2269 e-mail: occonnormho@gmail.com

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Vice Chair & Commissioner- Gary Gibson E16934 Scenic Dr., Fall Creek, WI 54742
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Commissioner- Lynn Norheim S8545 Cty Rd. AF, Augusta, WI 54722 Phone: 715-533-0050



Have you paid for your 2017 membership?

Have you recruited a friend to join?

Lake Eau Claire Association Membership

**** Complete the form below and mail it back with your payment ****
*** Membership dues are \$25.00 per year, per address ***

Name:

Address:

Email address for future newsletters:

Lake Eau Claire Fire # (if applicable):

If you are interested in making an additional donation* to one of the activities below, please specify which activity:

Fireworks Donation \$ _____

Lake Rehab Donation \$ _____

Return completed form and payment to:

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For more information on the LECA, go to www.lakeeauclaire.org/

* Donations to the LECA are tax deductible

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