



Ripples

CROW WING COUNTY
LAKES AND RIVERS ALLIANCE
P.O. BOX 53, PEQUOT LAKES, MN 56472

March 2014

In This Issue

Grant Writing Tips
LARA Membership
Renewal
Lakes and Rivers
Conference
President's Message
2013 Lake-Friendly
Awards
Get To Know Your
Board Members
Calendar of Events

Grant Writing Tips

By: *Paula West*
West Communications
LARA Board Director

Grant writing doesn't have to be hard, but you do have to be organized, know your project, its objectives, costs, and definable, measurable outcomes. Most good projects start with an over arching plan, for example a lake management plan, AIS prevention plan and/or mission statement of your organization, which your project clearly strives to achieve. Don't let availability of money define the project, but



rather define your project and then look for money.

Begin by gathering all the background information you'll need before you start writing.

- **Project concept:** Be able to articulate the project concept and objectives succinctly and clearly. Have a good sense of how the project fits with your plan or association's mission. Draft a project summary, no more than a couple of paragraphs. Then have it reviewed for clarity by others in your organization. Most grant proposals will call for an executive summary. If not, you still want to open the narrative of the proposal with several paragraphs that describe the objectives and outcomes of the project so the reader quickly grasps the purpose of the project.
- **Project Details:** Know the nature of the project; what is the need and how is it addressed? Establish a timetable. Define outcomes and how they will be evaluated and measured. Anticipate volunteer and/or other resources needed to accomplish the project.
- **Expenses:** After you establish the concept and the project details, you will be able to define the project costs. Consider staffing/contractors, travel expense, equipment and/or other materials, printing or postage, and other associated costs. Once you have selected a grant source, you can fit your costs into the requested categories. Volunteers may not get paid, but the value of their time can often be used as an in-kind match. If it appears that your costs will be prohibitive, you should scale back your plans or adjust them to remove the least cost-effective expenditures.

Now that you have your project defined and know what will be required to accomplish your goals and how much it will cost, look for funding sources. Carefully read the funder's request for proposal (RFP). It will tell you the funding categories, what expenses are allowed or not allowed, the application

deadline, other details, and who to contact for questions. You may have to adjust your narrative to address the specific funding interests. If your project doesn't fit the funder's interests and requirements, don't apply. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact the funder for clarification. Or, if you are unsure whether your project fits their funding criteria, contact the funder, describe the project, and get their opinion. Realize that some projects may need multiple sources of funding; when one source is secured it might be eligible to serve as a match to another source of funding.

There are a variety of government and non-government grants that may be available to lake associations; it will take some research to find one that fits your project objectives. The Crow Wing Environmental Protection Association (CWEPA) Fund, administered by LARA, has an annual grant funding cycle to support projects, programs and activities that lead to protection, restoration and preservation of natural resources and environmental assets within the boundaries of Crow Wing County. Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)3 or local unit of government. Applications open late summer; check the LARA website for details. Over \$2,000 was available this year for projects that met the grant criteria.

You may also want to visit the Minnesota DNR website for grant opportunities, including AIS prevention or management grants or the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program designed specifically to use Legacy Funds on smaller projects. The Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District may have funds for shoreland restoration, erosion control projects, and other "best management practices". Check the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency for water quality monitoring resources. Subscribe to the Environmental Stewardship Newsletter, which has grant notices; contact dhickman@brainerd.net.

Good luck with grant writing; it all starts with a well defined project and lots of enthusiasm to reach your goals. 🐾

LARA Membership Renewal Time

by Ann Beaver

My husband, Tom, and I are not snowbirds because we love Minnesota in the winter – yes, even this winter, although the long bout of subzero temperatures has sorely tested our love. However, we're not really attached to Minnesota in November and April. Yes, those months can be nice, but usually they aren't. So, we spend those iffy months in Florida, playing tennis, sailing, and golfing.

The 2014 LARA membership renewal letters were mailed February 18, a month earlier than in past years. This was done to allow time for me to collect the mail for a month before skipping town for five weeks and having to burden another board member with the task of making a weekly trip to the Pequot Lakes P.O. box to retrieve the important mail (your lake association's annual dues and updated contact information) and get rid of all the junk mail that accumulates.

The membership renewal letters were mailed to your lake association's address, usually a P.O. box but sometimes a board member's address. Please be sure to have someone check the P.O. box if it isn't done regularly. **Renewal** forms can also be found on the LARA website. Dues remain the same as in recent years and are based on your association's membership:

1-50 = \$25; 51-150 = \$150; 151-300 = \$75; over 300 = \$100.

We have already received dues from four lake associations, two of which have not been members for a few years – Bay Lake Improvement Association and Gilbert Lake Association. We welcome them back to the fold and we look forward to hearing from the rest of you at your earliest convenience. Thanks for your support through the years. Our combined voices through LARA can make a difference! 🐾



A Lakes and Rivers Conference For You!

Join us May 1-2 in Brainerd for the State of Water Conference!

The 2014 State of Water Conference is a unique opportunity that provides a venue for

- **Networking** with other citizens interested in improving and protecting water resources
- **Connecting** with resource professionals from around the state
- **Gaining** technical insights
- **Finding** opportunities to engage in water resource protection

The Conference will be held at **Cragun's Resort** in Brainerd, MN on May 1st -2nd, 2014.

Click [here](#) to visit the official Conference webpage.

Check out the Conference [Facebook](#) page. 🐾

President's Message Calling All Leaders

By: Phil Hunsicker

Let's talk leadership. First, there's been a slight change of leadership at LARA. I am now sharing the responsibilities of the president of the board with Mike O'Brien of Lower South Long Lake. I've held the position of president for a number of years and thought it was time to bring in some fresh new ideas. Mike drew the short stick. Like most of us lake leaders, I can't completely give up the reigns, so Mike and I will attempt a team approach to leading LARA and we'll see how that works. Hopefully, the headline in our next newsletter won't read, "LARA Co-President Mutilates Other Co-President with a Weed Roller."

The other important leadership news to pass along is that LARA helped recruit lake leaders from Crow Wing County to participate in a series of workshops designed to help them become more successful leaders, especially when it comes to dealing with water issues.

The workshops are being facilitated by the University of Minnesota Extension with funding made available through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The workshops are based on a book entitled **Strengths-Based Leadership**, by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie. The premise is that the best leaders understand their strengths – what they do well. Instead of focusing on their weaknesses, effective leaders hone their strengths and surround themselves with teams that are well-rounded and have strengths that supplement and complement those of the leader. Good advice for all lake associations. The book includes a self-assessment that helps individuals determine what their strengths are.

Later this year, up-and-coming leaders will be invited to participate in the workshops. If you know of any up-and-comers who are interested in filling the shoes of those of us who are ready to relax a bit in our advanced years, pass along their names and contact information to LARA. One caveat: they must reside (full-time or part-time) in either the Pine Watershed or the Crow Wing Watershed.

As a leader with some strengths and many weaknesses, I look forward to working with Mike to make LARA a more effective organization. I'm sure he will teach me a few things, but if he starts telling me he wants to show me how a weed roller works, I may have to decline. 🐾

Lake-Friendly Development Awards Recognize Five Deserving Projects

By: Philip Hunsicker



Phil Hunsicker

On October 17, 2013 at the Crow Wing County Land Services Building in Brainerd, a full room celebrated the eleventh year of the Lake-Friendly Development Awards by recognizing five deserving projects in Crow Wing, Cass and Morrison Counties. All of the projects promote ecologically sustainable and sensitive development. The hope is that through these awards, we will change the way we think about development in our shorelands. The future health of the region's lakes and rivers depends on it.

The Lake-Friendly Protection Strategy Award recognizes an organization or a local unit of government that creates an ordinance or regulatory code or other initiative that seeks to preserve the environmental integrity of our lake and river systems. The award for 2013 went to a collaborative effort to improve the boat access on Big Trout Lake in Crow Wing County. The group was made up of Darren Mayers of the Crow Wing Soil

and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Corrine Hodapp of the US Army Corps of Engineers, Dave Fischer of the Whitefish Area Property Owners Association (WAPOA), and Wade Miller with the Minnesota DNR. Along with improving the boat access, they worked in partnership to restore 300 feet of shoreline and create two rain gardens to treat and filter the runoff into

Big Trout Lake from Hwy 66. This project was a true collaborative effort between the local, State, and Federal Government units along with the Whitefish Area Property Owners Association.

The Lakescaping Award goes to a homeowner or contractor who employs the use of native vegetation and mostly natural materials to landscape their riparian property in a manner that not only complies with local shoreland regulations, but goes even further to protect the shoreline's environmental integrity in a way that can potentially improve water quality. This year, we recognized 3 projects. The first went to Shelley Larson of Hayland Woods Native Nursery. Shelly received a Community Partnership Grant from the Crow Wing SWCD to reduce runoff from properties on Crooked Lake and Grave Lake in Crow Wing County. Her work provided a model to more than 200 residents, trained

at least 100 riparian property owners during presentations and hands-on workshops, and helped build supportive community members able to mentor others in stormwater landscaping basics. She provided hands-on training to 50 volunteers where they learned what, why, and how to begin and plant a restoration project, and helped more than 20 Scout volunteers earn badges when she taught

them how to construct and install willow wattles to stabilize 250 ft of shoreline. Under Shelly's supervision, volunteers on this project donated 244 hours of labor and over 11,000 sq ft of shoreline property was restored to native vegetation.

The second Lakescaping Award went to Jens Bach of JB Outdoor Experience for his work with Geoff and Muffie Davidge on Lower Whitefish Lake in Crow Wing County. Muffie and Geoff's property includes 1300 feet of undeveloped shoreland, which in 2012 the DNR classified as a sensitive shoreline. Their property contains ponds, which connect to wetlands that are part of the lake ecosystem. In recent years, a nearby

private road had become a trench of water and sediment that flowed into two different ponds and eventually into the sensitive wetlands. Jens helped the Davidges to reduce soil erosion and runoff on their property. He designed a plan that included changing the grade of the road and channeling water into a rain garden. In



Shelley Larson



Big Trout Lake



Phil Hunsicker
accepting for Jens Bach

Lake-Friendly Continued on page 4

Lake-Friendly *Continued from page 3*

another area he installed slope breaks to slow and diffuse the water to prevent it from entering the wetlands. Jens designed and built the infrastructure while the Davidges installed the native plantings, thereby reducing the overall project cost to the property owners. According to the homeowners, Jens' knowledge about water flowage and design experience was just what they needed to solve their erosion problem. Muffie further emphasized Jens' innovation and willingness to work with them to design a natural landscape for better protection of the lake and wetland ecosystem.

The 3rd Lakescaping Award went to Dr. William Faber who turned a large beach and mowed grass area on Lake Alexander in Morrison County into a beautiful buffer of native plants.

In 2010 the DNR assisted Dr. Faber in planting his beach area into native plants. He left an area of about 20 feet for some chairs and a beach. The other 85 feet was restored into native plants. In 2011 the project was expanded to include the hillside

down to the lake that had been mowed for years. In 2012 the project was expanded to go around the boat house and in 2013

the area of lawn between the base of the hill and the beach was planted in native plants. This left only a path through the native plants to the beach and boat house. In all, over 12,000 square feet of shoreland buffer was completed.

The Lake Stewardship Award is to recognize a riparian property owner who protects water quality by simply leaving their shoreline in a non-disturbed natural state, which can include maintaining shoreland and aquatic vegetation, tree canopy, screening of structures for aesthetics, and non-removal of woody debris from the water. This award could also be used to recognize the use of a conservation easement to permanently protect a significant piece of shoreline. The 2013 award recognized the coordinated efforts to preserve 1,200 feet of sensitive shoreline and 43.5 acres of habitat on Big Deep Lake in Cass County.



Dr. William Faber



Big Deep Lake

Instrumental in this effort were Dale Yerger of the Deep Portage Foundation, Dr. Henry Roe (a land owner), and Wayne Ekberg and Orv Broberg of the Big Deep Lake Owners Association. In 2004, two land speculators from Ohio acquired a 42.5 acre parcel (with one house) on Big Deep Lake adjacent to the Deep Portage Learning Center. It was slated for a 15-lot subdivision and public access. Orv Broberg organized the Big Deep Lake Property Owners Association (BDLPOA) to petition for an EAW, which unfortunately, Cass County turned down. That didn't deter the concerned parties. The BDLPOA and the Deep Portage Foundation then negotiated a buyout from the land speculators for \$775,000. The BDLPOA raised \$28,000 and found Dr. Henry Roe to complete the funding of the acquisition and agree to a conservation easement. Dr. Roe now holds 39.5 acres with a limited subdivision to 2 parcels and the BDLPOA and Deep Portage hold 3 acres including 900 feet of shoreline and a tamarack swamp.

Prizes for winners included framed certificates of achievement, books, tote bags, and framed prints generously donated by Nisswa watercolor artist, Jerry Raedeke and photographer John Bonde. The Brainerd Chapter of Wild Ones and Brainerd Audubon provided financial assistance for matting and framing the prints. The awards are collaboratively sponsored by the Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society (BLAAS), the Crow Wing County Lakes and Rivers Alliance (LARA), the DNR Nongame Wildlife Program, the DNR Section of Fisheries, the Minnesota Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, The Nature Conservancy, the Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District, and the University of Minnesota Extension. 🐾

Get to know your Board Members

Harold "Stu" Stewart

What prompted you to become a member of the LARA board?

As a member of the Lake Hubert Conservation Association (LHCA) where I quickly became committed to the preservation of Hubert, I soon felt it was imperative for me to join LARA, an organization with a mission to preserve, protect, and conserve the lakes and rivers of Crow Wing County. Once a member of LARA, it made good sense for me to seek the position of board director in the hope of being instrumental in aiding LARA in fulfilling its mission.



What lake or river are you most connected to (in Crow Wing County)?
Since 1974 my heart has belonged to Lake Hubert.

What lake or river environmental issue is most important to you, and what are you doing to help the cause?

In my opinion, the most challenging and most serious environmental issue threatening our lakes and rivers is the rapid advancement of aquatic invasive species (AIS e.g. curly-leaf pondweed, zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil etc. with more invasives to come.) As director emeritus with LHCA and as a director of LARA I am committed to supporting efforts to educate, inspect, and eradicate the most serious threat to our way of life in the lake country, and to ensure these efforts are implemented, it is most important that funds are available in a timely manner to meet the costs of these efforts.

What can others do to help with this cause?

As never before, communities must step up to the plate, whether they be businesses, state, county or local political entities, to support the mission of associations such as LHCA and LARA to keep the lakes and rivers clear, clean, and safe from environmental threats. And as we focus on AIS, we must be ever mindful of the importance of maintaining good well-water quality. 🐸

Calendar of Events

April 5 Garden Expo at CLC
z.umn.edu/crowwingmgs

April 22 DNR Invasive Species Program final deadline for curly-leaf
http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/aquatic_invasive/index.html

May 1-2 The State of Water Conference
<http://www.conservationminnesota.org/state-of-water-conference/>

June 10 DNR Invasive Species Program final application deadline for Eurasian watermilfoil, and flowering rush
http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/aquatic_invasive/index.html

October 20-22 The Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference will be held at the Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (DECC)
www.UMISC2014.org.

Clean Water Fund Grant Recipients Announced

Go to www.bwsr.state.mn.us/cleanwaterfund/ for more information.

LARA Board Of Directors 2013-2014

Ann & Tom Beaver
218-568-5904
beaver@uslink.net

Eleanor Burkett
218-828-2326
burke044@umn.edu

Jodi Eberhardt
612-298-2935

Sharon Herwig
218-828-4091
CrowWingLARA@gmail.com

Sandy Holm
218-765-3309
rnsholm@brainerd.net

Phil Hunsicker
218-825-9215
phunsicker@q.com

Mike O'Brien
218-764-2666
mikeobriens@gmail.com

Mike Simon
612-822-2575
651-231-5829
and
218-764-3312
grikes130@msn.com

Harold Stewart
218-963-3878 and
507-289-5314
stu5010@juno.com

George Vilfordi
218-963-1021 and
214-357-132
georgevilfordi@verizon.net

Paula West
218-838-5010
westcom@brainerd.net

Officers:
Co-Presidents – Mike O'Brien
Phil Hunsicker
Vice President – Sandy Holm
Secretary – Ann Beaver
Treasurer – Ann Beaver

Newsletter Editor: Sharon Herwig