



A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you know, there is no place like Big Sand. The beautiful season of Fall allows Big Sand to show its' many hues of color. The beautiful fog filled dawns clearing by mid-morning to the stunning colors reflecting in a silent lake. Perfect reminders of the very special place we are privileged to know!

We feel privileged to be serving as BSLA co-presidents for 2016-2017. We are completing the term that Rich Jacobson had been elected to for 2015-2017. Unfortunately, he passed away in the spring of 2015. In his place Candy Malm continued her term as president for 2015-2016 and we were elected to serve for this year at the Annual meeting.

We are dedicated to continuing to move the lake association forward in all efforts to keep Big Sand Lake the beautiful and enjoyable place it is for all to enjoy. A partial list of the BSLA activities and accomplishments for 2016 and some of the goals for 2017 can be found in this newsletter.

We encourage all Big Sand residents to support the association with membership. Of the approximately 225 property owners, 150 are BSLA members as of November 1st. If your name is not on the enclosed list, please consider joining and supporting BSLA. To join or renew, please go to www.bigsandlake.org.

We thank Cindy Rehkamp who has generously volunteered to be our new Newsletter Editor! All readers are welcome to contribute articles of interest; interesting lake related essays, poetry, art, photos or suggestions for future articles. We would love to have you share your interests and talents!

Cindy is implementing a few changes to give the newsletter a fresh look; new paper color, font variety and more photos. Unfortunately, the economics of printing the newsletter allows only black & white in the printed version. The website version is in full color. Be sure to check it out at www.bigsandlake.org. To ensure all BSLA members and Big Sand residents receive a copy, the newsletter is published on-line and a print version is bulk mailed.

See you on the lake ~ maybe even this winter!

Barb Kimer & Catharine Williamson
BSLA Co-Presidents

Big Sand Lake 2017 Calendar

ANNUAL MEETING

June 24 - 9:00 AM at Evergreen Lodge

FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

July 4 - 11:00 AM at Northeast end of the lake

LADIES COFFEE/HAPPY HOUR

May 23, June 21, July 20, August 22

(Locations TBD)

SOCIALS

June 17 - Hosted by Aaron Roseth Family

July and August dates/locations TBD

September 16 - Headwaters Golf Club

IRON HORSE DINNERS IN NEVIS

Casually scheduled during the winter months

Contact Linda Van Bruggen, freddie54mn@yahoo.com,

for email notifications.

BSLA BOARD MEETINGS

May 20 - 9:00 AM

May 27, June 10

July, August, September and October dates TBD

DEADLINES FOR NEWSLETTER MATERIALS

SPRING ISSUE - April 1

FALL ISSUE - September 1

IMPORTANT CHANGES!

WATERCRAFT INSPECTIONS COMMITMENT & PAYMENT DEADLINES

By Catharine Williamson

Recently, Hubbard County transitioned the Aquatic Invasive Species Program to the Hubbard County Environmental Services Department. Formerly, it was managed under Hubbard County Soil and Water. Bill DonCarlos remains as the full time AIS program coordinator.

As a result of this change, we have been advised of program changes in our Watercraft Inspection Program.

- **Lake Associations must commit to the number of inspections hours by January 31st, 2017**
- **The payment deadline for inspections is March 1st, 2017**

How does this affect our Big Sand Lake Association?

The biggest impact is the payment being due March 1, 2017. Previously, payments were made for inspections during the Summer months. Our membership dues are traditionally collected between Spring and our annual meeting. Often times, additional contributions are sent along with dues for watercraft inspections. The March 1 required payment may result in a significant impact to our association's cash flow.

The BSLA treasury paid \$8950 in 2015 and \$7170 in 2016 for watercraft inspections at our access. This supported 1058 inspection hours in 2015 and 1000 inspection hours in 2016. The future hourly rate for inspections is likely to increase, adding to the cost.

How does the BSLA support this change?

The BSLA board recommends we establish a special project line item under our spendable fund in the Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund. Donated AIS project monies will be deposited into this line item account. These monies may be earmarked specifically for watercraft inspection hours and similar, future AIS projects. This allows us to retain a large source of money in our charitable spendable fund in the event of a lake crisis.

A separate campaign from our membership dues drive will encourage donations for this line item. Monies from the 'special project' fund would go towards 2017 Watercraft Inspection hours.

The Big Sand Lake Association and The Big Sand Lake Charitable Fund Advisory Committee plan a funding campaign for the 'special project' line item prior to year end, 2016.



CHANGING WATER - FISHING CHATTER

By Kevin Wehrs

Big Sand, not only one of the most beautiful lakes in the area but, in my opinion, the best all-around fishing in the Park Rapids area. Years ago Big Sand was well known for big walleyes, big smallmouth bass and trophy northern pike. It was a bit of a one-dimensional lake in terms of diversity. This wasn't necessarily a bad thing with the lake kicking out large numbers of trophy fish. It was common to catch large numbers of fish over 25" and almost rare to get one for the frying pans. Times have changed and, in my opinion, for the better. The fishery has aged with large weed beds popping up around the lake allowing it to become more diverse with large numbers of pan fish, largemouth bass and even a growth in the Musky population.

Years ago, I remember taking trips on the lake and if the walleye and smallmouth bass were not going, there were no other options but to put the boat on a trailer and try your luck elsewhere. Today that is no longer the case and it seems there is always some species that are willing to give the rod a bend. Although these other species have created more competition for the walleyes, the population still remains strong with larger numbers of fish under the 20" slot allowing anglers to come home with fish for the pan while still having the chance at a trophy!



With all these changes to the ecosystem I still believe the walleye fishing on Big Sand Lake is the best, most consistent in the area. There are lakes in the area that will out produce Big Sand early in the year but due to its majestic, clear, deep water, from the middle of June on, it is tough to beat!

KEEP HUBBARD COUNTY BEAUTIFUL

By John Brained

Over the last few years most of you have probably noticed the changes in Hubbard County such as more and larger power lines and related structures, an ever-increasing amount of cell phone towers, wider roads holding more & more traffic, continual buildup around the lakes, and even some light pollution resulting from our ever-brightening county. Some of these changes have adverse effects regarding the visual and physical environment of Hubbard County. We don't have to just blindly accept any new project or other changes in the county. This is because the adverse effects of new projects and changes can often be mitigated, and sometimes an individual project can be stopped altogether.

This summer I created a blog to help people deal with some of the changes happening in Hubbard County. It's entitled "Keep Hubbard County Beautiful" (KEHUB) <http://hubbardcounty.blogspot.com>. It describes actions that individuals can take to stop or mitigate projects that hurt the beauty and environment of Hubbard County. Please read it carefully. Keeping Hubbard County beautiful will require a lot of work by the people that love the area — constant monitoring of the local newspapers is necessary to see the types of projects that are being considered for approval. Otherwise, if we do nothing, we'll just witness the junkification of Hubbard County.

Submersible Well Pumps and Electric Shock Drowning

By Tom Mayerle

Electric Shock Drowning presents a lethal and growing threat to lakeshore owners and users. That's us and our family and friends.

It is caused by the leakage of a typically small amount of AC electric current into freshwater from any electrical installation or equipment. This low level current, seeking ground, passes through the victim, causing paralysis of the victim's muscles and drowning.

At Big Sand Lake, the electric current may come from an electric powered boat lift, an on-board battery charger on a boat, or lights on a dock. Over the years the number of these installations has grown, most are not installed by electricians, and all deteriorate with age and lack of ongoing inspection, maintenance and precautionary replacement.

The use of submersible well pumps in the lake for irrigation purposes, however, is not an everyday necessity or convenience. These devices are not designed to be installed in the lake, and so cannot be installed safely or remain safe over time. They should never be installed in the lake or any other water that a person may enter.

Pretty dramatic, perhaps, but here are the facts:

- the pumps have been certified for safety by Underwriter Laboratories only for installation on land in a steel well casing.
- owner manuals warn against using such pumps in lakes ("fatal electric shock hazard, use pump only in a water well . . . Do not install in any body of water that could be used for swimming or recreation.")
- given the risk, the Army Corp of Engineers several years ago required the emergency removal of all submersible pumps from waters under its jurisdiction that might be used for swimming or recreation.

Why would anyone install an electrical device in the waters off their beach? The lakeshore owner relies on the installer on the reasonable assumption that he knows what he is doing. But installers of irrigation systems (and boat lifts, dock lighting and other lake related equipment) typically would not be licensed electricians, and even the typical electrician might not be familiar with the special requirements for marine installations. Even then, private residential docks are exempt from the limited electrical code requirements that do apply to marinas and other commercial uses.

BIG SAND LAKE MANAGEMENT PLAN

By Barb Kimer

The primary purpose of the Big Sand Lake Association (BSLA) is the preservation of Big Sand Lake for today and for future generations to come.

To help BSLA stay true to this purpose, a Lake Management Plan was initially established in 2005 by the association under the guidance and with funding from the Minnesota Initiative Foundation's Healthy Lakes and Rivers Partnership Program. The LMP assists BSLA members and the BSLA Board of Directors to prioritize goals which will guide action and engagement, and track activities on an annual basis.

In addition to on-going AIS prevention, inspection activities and traditional annual activities, the following are goals suggested by BSLA Board members for 2016-2017. BSLA members and lake residents are encouraged to suggest a goal(s) they would like to have addressed in the coming year. Also, volunteers are needed to help accomplish these goals — many hands make light work! Please contact any one of the BSLA board members (listed elsewhere in this newsletter) or info@bigsandlake.org with your suggestion(s) and/or to sign on as a volunteer.

2016-2017 Lake Management Plan Goals

- Update and publish a new Big Sand Resident Directory
- Re-establish the 'calling tree' for Big Sand 'neighborhoods'
- Investigate possible strategies for controlling/reducing goose population on Big Sand
- Explore solutions for dealing with swimmers' itch
- Develop a new resident 'Welcome to Big Sand' packet
- Establish an AIS liaison/task force to coordinate with Hubbard County COLA

ZEBRA MUSSEL SAMPLER

By Catharine Williamson

The Sampler is hung off objects such as docks and buoys. Zebra Mussels tend to attach to the center column and the underside of the plates. It is now thought early detection is enhanced when accesses are thoroughly inspected and 'Samplers' are placed around the lake and inspected on a regular schedule. BSLA purchased 20 'Samplers' and placed them around our lake in September for approximately two weeks or more. Records are being kept on placement and inspection. BSLA may purchase additional 'Samplers' for Spring placement.

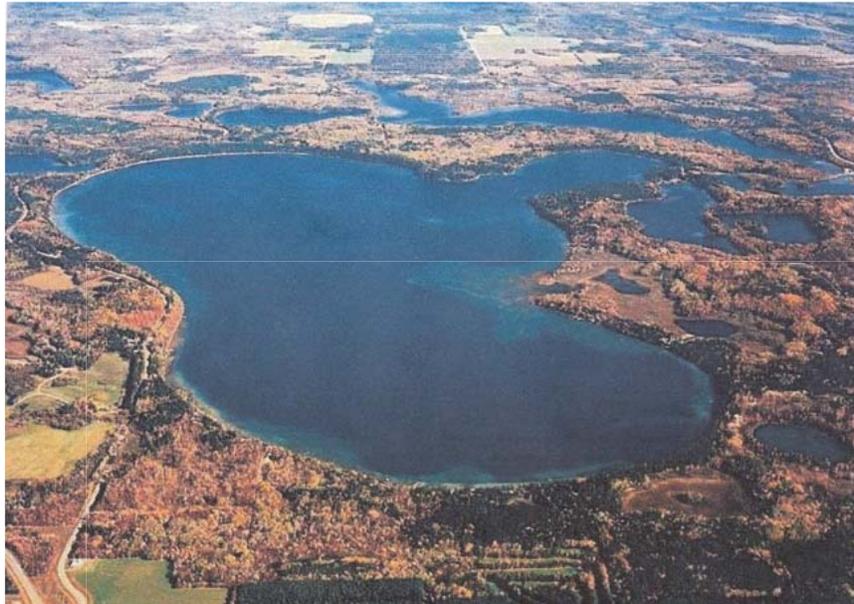
Please contact admin@bigsandlake.org
for additional information
or to request a 'Sampler' for your location!



Thank You BSLA Members and Volunteers

Below is a list of 2016 Big Sand Lake Association activities and Lake Management Plan accomplishments. Thank you to everyone who paid 2016 dues and to all volunteers who donated time and effort to help ensure an AIS free, healthy and enjoyable Big Sand Lake environment.

A list of current BSLA members is included in this newsletter. Please let us know if your name was inadvertently omitted. If you neglected to submit your 2016 dues, it's not too late! Go to www.bigsandlake.org and click on 'Membership'.



2016 BSLA ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Requested and funded 1000 hours of AIS inspector hours (\$17,500 in total)
- Applied for AIS grants/ received \$3,400 from Lake Emma Township, \$6,940 from the State of MN for AIS watercraft inspection funding
- Installed safety buoys to mark shallow areas on the lake
- Conducted monthly water quality testing for phosphorus content/clarity
- Conducted veliger testing to monitor early presence of zebra mussels.
- Purchased and distributed 20 zebra mussel samplers for early detection
- Continued communication with DNR on proposed development of Public Access
- Installed new west facing webcam; maintained existing east facing webcam
- Updated and maintained Big Sand website
- Promoted communication via two newsletters and Nextdoor Neighborhood
- Sponsored two delegates to attend statewide 2016 AIS Summit
- Supported advocacy groups with annual dues —
COLA, MN Lakes and Rivers, Conservation Minnesota
- Hosted annual meeting and family picnic and other social activities

CURRENT 2016 BSLA MEMBERS

Abraham, Brenda
 Anderson, Carl & Virginia
 Anderson, Phyllis
 Anderson, Rob & MaryBeth
 Armstrong, Bob & Joanie
 Askegaard, Paul & Nancy
 Ballou, Linda & Scott
 Bergman, David & Mary
 Billing, Eric
 Billion, David & Christine
 Birkeland, Paul & Marilou
 Blake, Ken & Lou
 Blomberg Family, Donna
 Bowers, Debbie
 Brainard, Andrea
 Brainard, Diana
 Brand, Bonnie & Jeff
 Bray, Bob & Adrienne
 Brock, Bill & Connie
 Bruggen Family
 Brussel, Thomas & Cynthia
 Carlson, Kurt and Jane
 Conely, Tim & Linda
 Conyers, Bob & Becky
 Corwin, Carolyn & Dick Brammell
 Corwin, Wick & Holly
 Crabtree, Betsy
 Cziok, Michael & Debra
 daSilva, Salvador & Kathleen
 Daugherty, Tim & Linda
 Douglas, Don & Ivadell
 Duer, Steve & Jill
 Durand, Larry
 Dyre, Dan
 Drye, Kay
 Eckles, Neil & Susan
 Eichten, Bill & Vickie
 Eichten, Ted
 Ellis, William & Camelita
 Fairchild, Marlene J.
 Fenton, Chuck & Sue
 Fischbach, Tim
 Fladeboe, Gene & Julie
 Ford, Bill & Diane
 Fuglestad, Steven
 Gent, Maurice & Carol
 Goldner, Barbara
 Griffin, Cindy Leach & Tom
 Griffin, Dave & Lavonne
 Gulbrandson, Mark & Linda
 Hamann, Daniel
 Hanleys, Bill & Kelly
 Haugen, Steve Hillson & Kristin
 Heilman-Kimpton, Katy

Hendricks, Ray and Debbie
 Herman, Doug & Sarah
 Hestnes, Tim & Mary
 Heysse, Bruce & Diane
 Hilger, Chris & Ann
 Hilger, Tim & Kathy Ebert
 Hilger, Peter & Linda
 Hilger, Tricia
 Hjelm, Ken & Andrea
 Hoodecheck, Don & Jeanne
 Igel, Tom & Patti
 Johnson, Deanne & Jill
 Johnson, Michael & Brenda
 Jones, Ellis & Cynthia
 Judson, Alan & Joayne
 Keiler, Russ
 Kimer, Tom & Barb
 Klepinski, Terry
 Kobriger, Larry & Pamela
 Korte, Jane E.
 Krueger, Wayne & Beth
 Kvamme, Evelyn
 Lageson, John & Rhonda
 Larsen, Ruth
 Larson, Connie & Eric
 Lee, Paul & Linda
 Legun, Becky
 Lewis, Jacquelyn
 Long, Mimi & Dick
 Malm, Candy
 Marzolf, Michael & Nerissa
 Mausbach, Charles & Peggy
 Mayerle, Susan & Tom
 McConn, Ann & Butch
 McDonald, John & Polly
 Mears, Rena & Peter Walker
 Meredith Skp & Sue
 Monson, Jon & Mary
 Moody, Frank & Rosemary
 Moore, Michael & Lisa
 Naerbout, Tom & Cathie Chandler

Narum, Cheryl (Candor) & Rick
 Nelson, John P. & Anne
 Nelson, Rolf & Karen
 Nippert, Elizabeth
 Norman, Gary & Deanna
 Ondracek, Kevin & Sandy
 Paster, David & Katie
 Pederson, Bruce & Joyce
 Perkins, Charles & Barbara
 Peterson, Dennis & Jennalou
 Peterson, Jane & Brian
 Pierson, John & Norma
 Phelps, Dorsey/Point House Association
 Prah, Margaret & Tom Patterson
 Preusse, Scott & Sherry
 Provinzino Richard & Lynn
 Quaday, Steve & Liz
 Rath, Jennifer Jacobson
 Reed, Lisa
 Rehkamp, Cindy & John
 Roseth, Aaron & Anna
 Ryan, Pat & Nancy
 Salzwedel, Jake & Sarah
 Schell, Dr. Steven & Tara
 Schell, Jean
 Schmitt, Dr. Tom & Virginia
 Scott, John & Nancy
 Scott, Tom
 Seaver, Randy & Sharon
 Sederstrom, Richard & Carol
 Spolum, Bob & Laura
 Steffen, John and Susan
 Stein, Kevin & Jane
 Stephenson, James & Janis
 Sutor, Bruce & Shari
 Tharaldson, Tom & Debra
 Thibault, Harry & Molly
 Thuleen, Rich & Carol
 Tiller, Jennifer & Michael
 Udem, Marcia
 VanBruggen, Sr. Tom & Linda
 Vanderstad, Alan & Sarah
 Wallace, Jim
 Waters, Randy & Yvonne
 Wehrs, Dan & Tracy
 Weis, Tom & Irene
 Wenzel, Jim & Nancy
 Wilcox, Kenneth & Norma
 Wildman, Russell & Sarah
 Williamson, Stan & Catharine
 Willis, Greg & Pam
 Wimmer, Randy & Robyn
 Zimmerman, Al & Carol
 Zimmerman, Todd

BIG SAND LAKE WATER REPORT

By Richard Sederstrom

First, and if you were not yet here before July, you will not understand the plaintiff import of this comment: we have water now. After a dry winter, a dry spring, a dry June, we started out shallow, some of us beaching and tying our boats to their lifts. Après quoi, le deluge. And, as you know, water has been abundant and beautiful.

So, having determined that we do have water to have been tested, let's get on with the news. First, the Secchi disc readings averaged a bit lower than the average of about 24 feet. This is doubtless largely due to the warmth of a summer that started early and went long. As we all know, this has been the trend during the 2000s so far.

This may also explain the rather drastic readings in Dissolved Oxygen (that is, the oxygen that is available for lake animal life to exist at their appropriate depths). Big Sand did better for most of the summer than did some other lakes where fish did suffer die-off, like Kabekona, but still, the warm temperatures dropped well below normal and stayed there into fall.

Once again, we have discovered no evidence of zebra mussels on Big Sand. Boats inspected at the accesses were not reported to show evidence of the little monsters, and our veliger tests proved negative once again. This does not mean that no zebra mussels exist in the lake, but that no evidence has been found. Negative evidence proves nothing, but we can say that the news is not bad news.

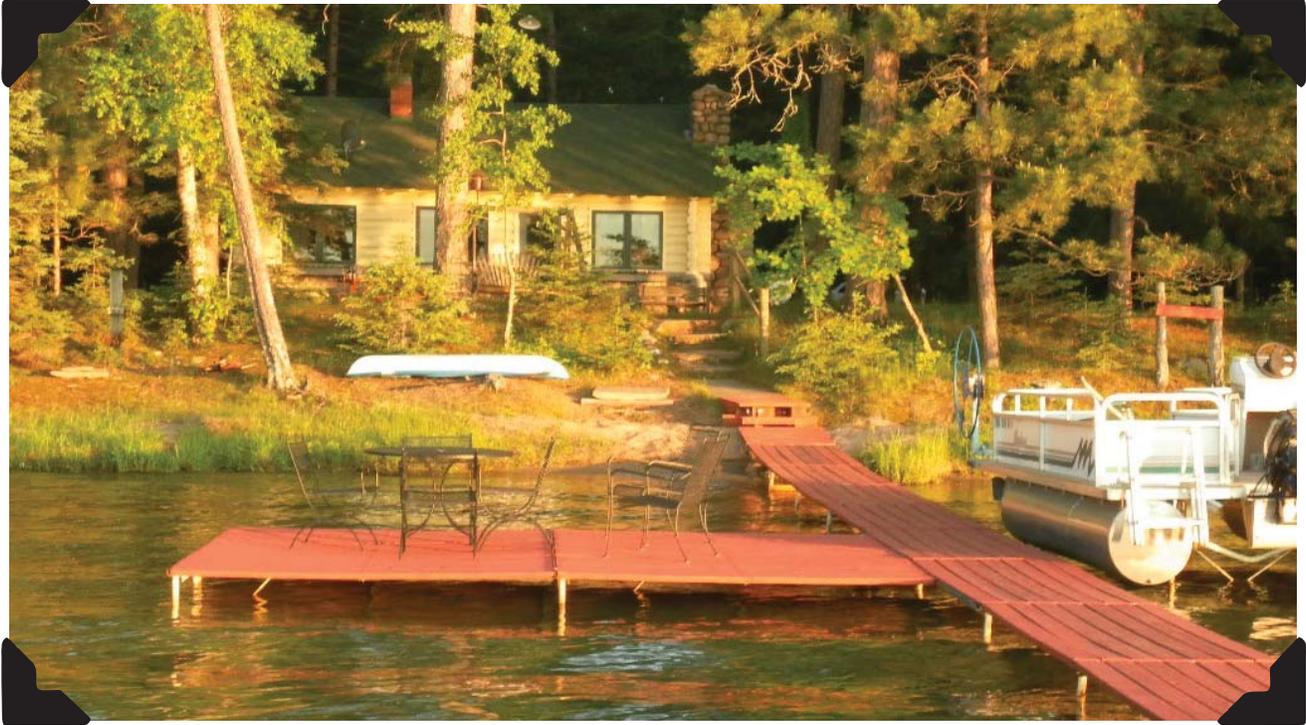
What “not bad news” means is that we are doing what we can to prevent the appearance of zebra mussels and all the other invasive vermin that continue to surround us. It also means that we will be very foolish if we decide either that we are immune or that, because the spread of invasive species seems to many of us to be inevitable, we can do nothing about it.

Minnesota is working diligently to discover controls for the most dangerous of these species, without harming indigenous plants and animals, as well as plankton necessary to the well-being of everything that lives in the lake. Our job, if we recognize that we are honored to be caretakers—temporary caretakers—is to keep in mind that we have children, grandchildren, and generations of descendants to whom we must leave an environment as near to what has nourished as we possibly can—Big Sand Lake to be sure, but all of Earth as well.



BIG SAND LAKE MEMORIES

By Peter Pierson



Every spring since I was five, my family returns to a northern Minnesota cabin. These days we arrive in separate vehicles, from different directions; some, including myself, from far-away places. Today, this place has much to do with our simply keeping our sense of family. We arrive in the dark, one by one, late on a Friday night in May. The moon shines through the still-bare branches that envelop the drive, the hardwoods just starting to dare to open their buds. The air is fresh and rich with the smells of wet earth and last year's rotting leaves. It feels much as it did seven months before when the last of us double-checked locks and faucets and drove out in a cold October mist.

This is the place of our summer. Once the season has passed, we leave it rest and somehow tuck it in our memory, seemingly unchanged and unchanging, awaiting our presence the next spring for our nostalgia, and our affirmation. Our lives will come to know winter, and know it well, yet the autumn chores of preventing cracked water pipes and protecting windows are done more out of ritual than any real understanding. It is somehow difficult to conceive that winter ever touches this place, just as it is difficult to acknowledge that 50 years have passed since we first came here.

On one of these early spring nights when I was maybe seven or eight, we arrived to a warm, welcoming light from the kitchen windows. My grandparents had arrived a week before, as they did before age and the Arizona heat thinned their blood, then their resolve. My grandfather still held pride in being able to brag, which he did relentlessly, about their arriving just after the last of the snow, then having enough a relationship with his gods for their departure in the fall to coincide with the very day before first drop of rain turned white and took its time to float, not fall, to the ground.

BIG SAND LAKE MEMORIES, CONTINUED

On that May night, we were met first by the smell of warm bread in the oven, then by my grandmother holding a large, glass mayonnaise jar in her hands. She could not wait to show us what she had found. Inside the jar were two light brown, almost opaque exoskeletons. The skins, dried in the shape of the creatures whose bodies they had contained, were so light and insubstantial they seemed to float in the jar as we passed it between us. Each was about two inches long, prehistoric, looking as if they were stolen from a paleontology exhibit. These were the skins, my grandmother explained, of the large water bugs that turn into dragonflies. These were what were left after the aquatic nymphs crawled out of the lake, across the beach, up the concrete block boathouse walls, split their bodies open, and spread their wings. I'm not sure, but either despite or because of the inherent sense of wonder of the child I was, I could not believe her explanation.

A few years later, I actually saw the process with my own eyes. The nymph was still wet when I discovered it on the trunk of a jack pine along the edge of the beach. I checked its progress over an hour as it sat, motionless, as if to gather its strength for the metamorphosis, then watched as it slowly opened itself along its backside and gave way to wings, then body, then legs. The new creature rested on the old. The dragonfly warmed itself in the sun, its delicate wings drying, taking on substance and strength.

I imagined that the process of building towards its first flight would be as slow and deliberate as shedding its skin had been. Having just discovered its new wings, perhaps the new dragonfly would need to take a few apprehensive strokes, practicing, before it actually took off. I assumed it had to learn to fly. I was amazed when, in a blink of an eye, the dragonfly simply alit and disappeared into the sky.

The cabin Peter Pierson writes of, on the southwest shore of Big Sand, has been in the family for 51 years, purchased by Dr. Lawrence and Gladys Pierson in 1965. Now, the great-grandchildren of Larry and Gladys are growing up having the 90-year old log cabin and the clear, cold water as part of their lives while the others pause, dipping their fingers in the water when they come and go, in gratitude that they've had this place all these years.

Bio: Peter Pierson spent a good part of his adult life in northern Minnesota. His work as a remote firefighter and paramedic, as well as freelance writing and communications, then took him to Saskatchewan, then remote Alaska. He now lives in Prescott, Arizona, where he is finishing his MA work with Prescott College. He works in communications for a regional watershed organization and is currently a candidate for an Arizona State House seat. He never meant to stay away as long as he has, and looks forward, always, to more time at the lake.

This piece was originally produced and aired on KAXE/KBXE-Northern Community Radio (which you can pick up in the Park Rapids area at 90.5FM). A former recipient of a Minnesota Arts Council/McKnight Fellowship, his essay work has also been aired on CBC Radio One in Canada and published for a variety of print media, including, among others, Fourth River, Minnesota Monthly, 5senses, Voices for the Land (Minnesota State Historical Society Press), and The Ester (Alaska)

UPDATE ON PUBLIC ACCESS DEVELOPMENT

By Barb Kimer

The house was sold and removed early this past summer from the property owned by the DNR next to the current public access. Richard Sederstrom, chair of the BSLA Public Access Task Force, received the response below to his mid-September request for a status update from David Schocktzo, DNR Trails and Waterways division, who is overseeing the development of the Big Sand public access property.

“Our archeologist had to make numerous visits to the site as they had some concerns that needed to be addressed. I understand the site inspections are getting the formal review right now and I was told last week I should be able to get the hole filled in from the house. As far as a site plan, this is likely years out as I have a growing list of sites that need development, but no money.”



As of November 15, the site had not yet been cleared of debris, nor has the foundation hole been filled in since removal of the house. The foundation area is only partially fenced. The BSLA membership will be informed on further progress of the development when available. A color view of the photos included in this article are available in the Fall/Winter 2016 Newsletter on the Big Sand website, www.bigsandlake.org.

ARCHEOLOGISTS DIG AT THE DNR PUBLIC ACCESS PROPERTY

By Barb Kimer

The DNR contracted with archeologists, as required, to assess the public access property for any potential cultural/historical conflicts prior to further development. At the time of this writing, the DNR is still waiting for a final report. However, in talking with the archeologists at the site, they said they had found a few arrowheads and pieces of pottery in the initial test digs. The group of archeologists working the site were very friendly and open to explaining the process for the dig and showing findings to passer-bys. More information about the full report and status of the property will be shared with the BSLA membership when available.



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Calling Tree Coordinator

OPEN

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Aquatic Vegetation:

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Wildlife / Environment:

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