

## Letter from the President

Greetings to all,

As we end year 2017, we have much to look back at and appreciate that “life at the lake is good”. I hope you can all join me in saying that it was a terrific year. The warmth of summer took a while to blow in, and seemed a bit early to exit. We were blessed with a spectacular fall, as it included delightful temperatures, and beautiful color. We all survived the storm that literally blew through in June. Hopefully by now, structures are rebuilt, items replaced, and fallen trees have all been cut up. We can move on to more desirable activities.

Volunteering is a huge part of what makes Stone Lake such a wonderful place to spend time. Many committed time coordinating and helping with monitoring at the boat landing to keep invasive species out of the lake. Some helped in taking out Purple Loosestrife (an invasive plant) along the shore line. There are others that do the water quality depth test every year, and put our annual calendar together. Several are diligent in seeing that the lake gets stocked with fish. Many have assisted in providing and organizing a great setting for our annual picnic, January dinner, boat parade, and golf outing. Others have been helpful in communicating what other lakes are doing, and helping to keep us informed with the Town Board activities, with newsletters and membership updates. I’ve probably missed an activity along the way, but you get the point. It takes a lot of people behind the scenes. It’s GREAT that so many continue to step up. Thanks to all that have volunteered, as we couldn’t do it without you. I especially want to thank the board for their time and commitment to keeping Stone Lake such an outstanding lake and community. I encourage all of you to look for YOUR opportunity to pitch in. We are currently down one member from our board, as Bob Eads has sold his home on Little Stone. At the June meeting, we will be accepting nominations to fill that spot, and take it to a vote at the August meeting.

I truly wish all of you a wonderful holiday, and look forward to working with you in 2018.

*John Ryan* - President SOSLA  
(Shore Owners of Stone Lake Association)

## SOSLA Upcoming 2018 Meetings, Events, and Important Dates!

- **January 6, evening**  
*TENTATIVE DATE*  
Winter Dinner at  
Red Schoolhouse  
Wines.  
5 PM social hour  
6 PM dinner  
Desserts to follow at  
Doug Baker’s home.
- **June 16, 10:00 AM**  
Membership  
Meeting at Stone  
Lake Town Hall.
- **July 4, 3 PM**  
Boat Parade  
(Rain date July 5)
- **August 18, 10:00AM**  
Membership  
Meeting at Stone  
Lake Town Hall.  
Annual Picnic and  
Golf Outing to  
follow.

## SOSLA OFFICERS AND BOARD

*President:* John Ryan

612.940.8623

[Jrryan1127@aol.com](mailto:Jrryan1127@aol.com)

*Vice President:* Steve Erickson

507.259.3798

[Erickson.stephen@mayo.edu](mailto:Erickson.stephen@mayo.edu)

*Secretary:* Melissa Sunderland

715-416-2399

[mandrea75@yahoo.com](mailto:mandrea75@yahoo.com)

*Treasurer:* Doug Baker

608.220.6303

[dougstonelake@gmail.com](mailto:dougstonelake@gmail.com)

*Past President:* Gary Erickson

715.865.4406

[GaryJohnErickson@aol.com](mailto:GaryJohnErickson@aol.com)

### *Board of Directors*

Jordan Donatell

715.441.0068

[Jdonatell85@yahoo.com](mailto:Jdonatell85@yahoo.com)

Gail Emerson

715.865.2013

612.927.64414

[gaile@visi.com](mailto:gaile@visi.com)

Cathie Erickson

715.865.4406

[CathieErickson@aol.com](mailto:CathieErickson@aol.com)

Betty Hanson

715.865.2710

[bahanson@charter.net](mailto:bahanson@charter.net)

Susan Mattis Turnham

218.355.1368

[smturnham@aol.com](mailto:smturnham@aol.com)

Karen Young

715.865.2137

[youngcederhouse@centurylink.net](mailto:youngcederhouse@centurylink.net)

*Membership:* Mary and Bill Byrkit, Co-Chairs

715.865.5209

[byrkitspt@charter.net](mailto:byrkitspt@charter.net)

*Newsletter:* Susan Mattis Turnham

218.355.1368

[smturnham@aol.com](mailto:smturnham@aol.com)

## August Membership Meeting Summary

Thank you to those who attended the August General Membership Meeting. We had 29 of our 79 members in attendance. Volunteer EMT Roy Hendricks spoke on 911 procedures for our area and it was very informative. Currently there are 4-5 volunteer EMT's working in shifts to cover our area and they are able to respond to calls within 10-15 minutes. There are future plans for Stone Lake to have a 24-hour manned station which will improve on these response times.

New board members Melissa Sunderland and Susan Mattis Turnham were voted in and outgoing board members Mary Byrkit and Rolf Thompson were acknowledged for their service.

It was decided that the 2018 Boat Parade will be on July 4th at 3pm. Concerns brought up included safety on Lake Road and encouraging people to observe the speed limit, and also speed on the lake when boating near shore. With the increasing water levels this is important to control shore erosion. We are also looking for speaker suggestions for 2018 meetings.

Members voted on calendar pictures, enjoyed great food and conversation at the potluck hosted by Gary and Cathie Erickson followed by a fun golf outing.

*Melissa Sunderland* - Secretary

## Membership Summary

Our 2017 Membership Drive ended up very successful although it evolved quite slowly. We ended up with 73.8% of all property owners joining SOSLA. This has been reported as VERY GOOD compared to most lake associations. All members should be very proud of our SOSLA Board as they work extremely hard at keeping our lake SAFE, CLEAN AND ACTIVE. Please encourage your neighbors to join SOSLA in 2018. You will find a Membership Application Form in this Newsletter. Let's get an early start for 2018!

*Mary & Bill Byrkit* - Membership

## Fish Report

We night electrofished the entire shoreline (4.0 miles) of Stone Lake on September 21, 2017. We only collected walleye under twelve inches. We also counted any common carp during the survey. Also, last season, DNR stocked walleye were given a fin clip. We checked all young walleye sampled for this fin clip.

After sampling the shoreline we collected twenty-one young walleye. Eleven of these fish were young-of-year (spawned this past spring) and the catch rate was three fish/mile of shoreline sampled. The remaining ten walleye were one year old and the catch rate was approximately three fish/mile of shoreline. These are both low catch rates. However, compared to past fall surveys for Stone Lake, not too different from normal for the lake. Also, nine of the ten one-year-old walleye were clipped. This result means 90% of these fish were from stocking last fall.

What does this mean? There is a low level of walleye natural reproduction in the lake, but not enough to sustain a good walleye population. Stocking is needed to maintain/bolster a low density walleye population in the lake.

Common carp were also counted during this survey (as they are in every survey). We counted five common carp in this survey, which is a very low number compared to lakes with carp problems. That equates to about one fish/mile of shoreline.

Also, keep in mind that these are draft numbers and a final report will be put together this winter.

*Craig M. Roberts*

Fisheries Biologist - Washburn and Burnett Co.  
Bureau of Fisheries Management  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

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## Loosestrife Lament

2017 was a mixed year for purple loosestrife, an invasive aquatic species that infests our lake. From the loosestrife view, good news was a partial crop failure due to the beetles that eat and destroy loosestrife. Gary Erickson, the beetle curator, released 200 – 300 on Little Stone, not nearly enough to provide maximum depredation. There is still a healthy crop of plants on the north end of Little Stone. On Big Stone, there was a definite decrease in plants in their home range of 11:00-1:00, true north =12:00. I found sporadic plants from 7:00-10:00, some in new areas. I pulled all Big Stone plants by hand. Lake Avery has no loosestrife.

Nest year Gary plans to try growing beetles again, and I hope to continue surveillance with manual removal. We appreciate the help of all shore owners who pull plants on their shoreline.

*Steve Erickson*



## Wisconsin Lakes and Washburn County Lakes & Rivers Association

Much of the work I've been doing with the Wisconsin Lakes association and Washburn County Lakes & Rivers Association (WCLRA) has focused on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), particularly dealing with the zebra mussels that were found in Big McKenzie Lake last fall. (Big, Middle and Lower McKenzie Lakes are located on the western edge of Washburn County.) It's a tough battle, but both volunteers and professionals from Washburn and Burnett Counties are working to stop the spread of these and other AIS.

Draining all water from any watercraft leaving a lake or river is required by Wisconsin law. Another important step in stopping zebra mussels is to wash watercraft that have been in infested (or possibly infested) waters before they are moved to another lake. McKenzie Lake Association (MLA) and other nearby associations have put up self-service wash stations at their public landings. They provide signage alerting people to the presence of zebra mussels and explaining how to wash your watercraft with a mild bleach solution (2 tablespoons bleach per 1 gallon water). They also provide garden sprayers with the bleach solution which must be changed daily by their volunteers. In addition, Burnett County recently purchased a pressure washer and trailer with their grant funds. WCLRA and BCLRA provided the \$1500 needed for the grant match.

Another important part of the effort has been to determine whether zebra mussels are in any other nearby waters. The methods used are visually scanning the shorelines and lakebeds, veliger tows that collect samples to be tested in laboratories for the presence of veligers (larval stage), and plate samplers that are suspended from docks to collect any mussels in the area. WDNR, Washburn and Burnett Counties, the National Park Service, St. Croix River Association and volunteers from MLA and other lake associations have searched lakes and rivers that are considered to be suitable for sustaining a zebra mussel population.

Unfortunately, enough zebra mussels have now been found in Big McKenzie to consider it an established population. That's roughly 800 that I know of. Since the findings were all around the lake, it's highly unlikely that any kind of chemical control could be safe and effective. Two more zebra mussels were found in Middle McKenzie. None have been found on other lakes or rivers in Washburn or Burnett Counties. We will be working over the winter to plan next year's control efforts.

*Cathie Erickson*



## Ice Freeze / Thaw Dates

When compiling this newsletter – my first as editor – I asked the Board for suggestions on content. One suggestion was publishing the ice in and out dates. In my newsletter collection I found an article from 2010 by Randy Nord. He listed most of the freeze and thaw dates from the winters of 95/96 through 09/10. I used his dates as a starting point and then added dates I have since the winter of 13/14. Mary Byrkit and Karen Matott also provided dates and I'm hoping some of you can too. Please contact me if you have info for any of the missing freeze and thaw data or corrections to what I have here.

When looking over the dates, you'll see close to a five week range in the fall freeze and over a six week range in the spring thaw. While I don't have an exact date, I remember coming home from college one Thanksgiving break and being able to snowmobile across the lake. Depending on when Thanksgiving was that year, that must be among the earliest freeze dates. One of the latest freeze ups was December 28, 2015. I took the picture used for December in this year's SOSLA calendar on December 27 of that year!

While I prefer soft water over months of hard ice, the ice does allow us to travel our lake via foot and motorized vehicle. I hope you enjoy the upcoming winter and if you're not already a fan of ice, consider a jaunt on our frozen lake. It's a fun perspective to "walk on water" and view the shore from the lake.

*Susan Mattis Turnham*

| Winter | Freeze | Thaw   |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 95/96  | Nov 24 | May 3  |
| 96/97  | Nov 27 | Apr 23 |
| 97/98  |        |        |
| 98/99  | Dec 21 | Apr 10 |
| 99/00  | Dec 18 | Mar 26 |
| 00/01  | Dec 3  | Apr 24 |
| 01/02  | Dec 23 | Apr 19 |
| 02/03  | Dec 4  | Apr 18 |
| 03/04  |        | Apr 20 |
| 04/05  | Dec 17 | Apr 9  |
| 05/06  | Dec 3  | Apr 11 |
| 06/07  | Dec 5  | Apr 1  |
| 07/08  | Dec 1  | May 1  |
| 08/09  | Dec 7  | Apr 16 |
| 09/10  | Dec 11 | Mar 30 |
| 10/11  |        | Apr 15 |
| 11/12  |        | Mar 21 |
| 12/13  |        | May 13 |
| 13/14  | Dec 1  | Apr 30 |
| 14/15  | Nov 29 | Apr 1  |
| 15/16  | Dec 28 | Apr 2  |
| 16/17  | Dec 16 | Apr 3  |
| 17/18  | ??     | ??     |



## Lake Water Quality Report 2017

As part of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Citizens Lake Monitoring program we conducted several on the water readings during the past season. Testing includes water clarity (secchi depth measurements), total phosphorus, chlorophyll and temperature readings.

Our overall findings continue to show that Stone Lake remains one of the clearer lakes in our region. Our summer average secchi disk reading was just over 17 feet compared to the average of 8.1 feet for other lakes in the area. The deepest reading we recorded was 26 feet-in early June. In mid-July we recorded our lowest reading-15 feet.

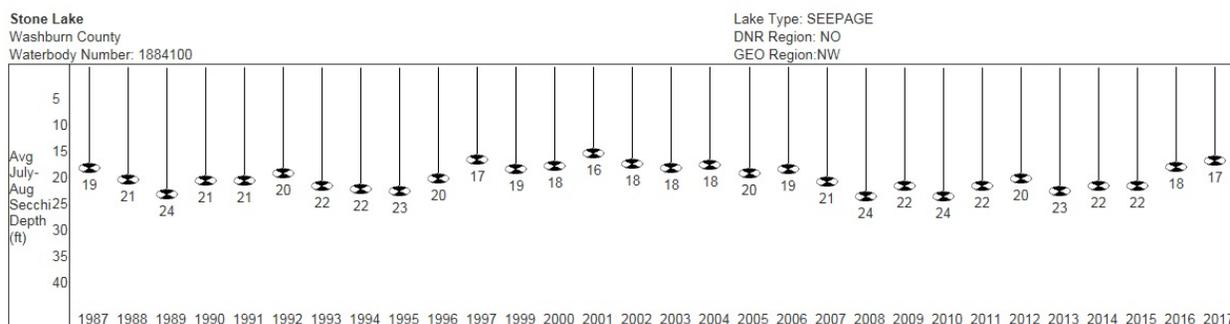
Water clarity is affected by many factors-rainfall, run-off, temperature and plant life to name just a few. In looking at our secchi depth readings over the past 30 years there seems to

be a correlation between water level and clarity. In years when our lake level is low, secchi readings are higher possibly due to less rainfall and run off. Conversely, when lake levels are high, our secchi readings tend to decrease slightly.

The DNR classifies Stone Lake as a mesotrophic lake based on the clarity, temperature, phosphorus and chlorophyll readings. "Mesotrophic lakes contain moderate amounts of nutrients, and contain healthy, diverse populations of aquatic plants, algae, and fish" according to the Wisconsin DNR.

If you are interested in water quality data on Stone Lake or any lake in Wisconsin, go to: <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/clmn/>.

*Allan Rosenwald  
Paul Callahan  
Mary Grau*



Past secchi averages in feet (July and August only).



### Membership Reminder

Let's get an early start on 2018. Fill out the enclosed membership form and send in your 2018 dues today!

## Summer 2017 Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Updates

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) landing monitoring activities at the Stone Lake boat landing successfully contacted 669 individual people and 282 boats in 2017. Of the 282 boats contacted, 70 had operated the boat in a different waterbody in the five days prior to entering or leaving Stone Lake, some of which were AIS infested waters. In total, 103 hours were volunteered by many different SOSLA members in addition to monetary donations to the AIS fund. The continued strong involvement by shore owners contributing their personal time to our AIS monitoring and education program show how much we truly care to protect our lake from aquatic invaders. As you recall, it is a requirement of our grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) that we match 25% of the overall project costs with local volunteer time.

We had a new paid landing monitor in 2017, which required added work on the front end to find the right fit for our AIS position. Mike did a great job, he was a very detailed oriented and reliable working on his own. I hope many of you had a chance to meet Mike, if you see him around town this in the coming months take time to thank him again for his work this summer. We will be posting the paid AIS monitoring position again this coming late winter/early spring for the 2018 work, if you think you know of someone who would be interested in the position please pass their information along to me.

At this time, I'm in the process of securing our AIS monitoring grant for 2018 landing monitoring activities, which is due by December 10th to the WDNR. If you did not

get a chance to volunteer or contribute a monetary donation to our AIS monitoring and education efforts in 2017, please consider making an effort to get involved in the upcoming work in 2018, I will send an update and reminder this spring via email. I would like to extend a sincere thank you to everyone who took an active role in the 2017 volunteering. It is a benefit to us all that we do everything possible to curb the introduction of aquatic invaders to our pristine lake.

Have a great winter,

*Jordan Donatell*



Cleaning boats and equipment before leaving the landing is an important step that citizens can take to prevent the spread of invasive species. (Photo courtesy of MN DNR)

Shore Owners of Stone Lake Association  
P.O. Box 102, Stone Lake, WI 54876

