

# Little Sissabagama Shore Owners Association Newsletter

Edition 1 - Autumn 2021

Greetings from the LSSOA President

Little Sissabagama, that little piece of heaven we all share an interest in, gives us pride of place as we recognize its beauty and riches. I am particularly interested in the natural habitat of the lake, the plants and animals in and out of the water while I spend as much time as possible on our old pontoon - sometimes painting landscapes of the lake. I'm impressed with the current quality of the lake and the efforts longstanding lake shore owners have made to keep the lake in good condition, even, at times, sacrificing a clear view of the lake in favor of maintaining wooded/vegetative shorelines. As a result of this good stewardship, this lake is home to an otter family, two loon families, a healthy breeding osprey family, many others such as egrets, muskrats, turtles, kingfishers, beavers, ducks, owls, an array of fish and so much more.

## Welcome to the new LSSOA Board Members!

**Jean Accola** is the new lake association president. She and her husband, Yata Peinovich, purchased the home on Boxing Camp Trail in the fall 2017. They came from Pepin County, WI, where they raised two children and now have five grandchildren. Yata is a professional musician and retired social worker. Jean is a professional artist and operated an art gallery for over thirty years. She is also the loon ranger for Loon Watch since 2020. "I'm honored to take the position of President of the Lake Association for the next two years."

**Peter Skwira** is our new Vice president. His parents Karen and Mike Skwira purchased Black Eagle Lodge on Ogren Bay in 1981. The Skwiras hosted initial gatherings of lake shore owners to promote good stewardship of the lake and land. Pete is one of four siblings. He is married to Beth and they have three girls. Pete loves fishing and promises to do a Lake Shore Owners Association Fish Fry for us in the coming year.

**Ron Marquis** is the new treasurer. He is assisted by his wife Lois Carolan a retired CPA. Ron and Lois own a lovely cabin on the east side of the lake that they built in 2007-2008. Ron retired as an engineer from 3M. They have five children and twelve grandchildren.

**Molly Tomczak** is the new secretary but she is certainly not new to the lake. Her family goes back the farthest in that her great uncle purchased the property one hundred years ago on the east side of the lake. Molly says, "Little Siss is my favorite place in the whole world so being on the board, getting to know other owners on the lake and working to continue the mission of the association has me very excited for the opportunity."

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## **Thank you to Gene Button, his family members and Endres Mfg!**

Have you noticed the new dock on the Big Island? Gene Button has worked at Endres as a Structural Detailer for 35 years. We owe a debt of gratitude to Endres Mfg. (Waunakee, WI) for the donation and to Gene and family (son Mike and son-in-law Ryan Gilles) for installing the dock as a place to land and to keep feet dry as we explore the beautiful Big Island!





## Water Quality Report 2021

***Thank you Ron Marquis for taking the water quality readings for Lil Siss! Below is the report for 2021***

The average summer (July-Aug) secchi disk reading for Little Sissabagama Lake - Deep Hole (Sawyer County, WBIC: 2394100) was 11.31 feet. The average for the Central Georegion was 10.3 feet. Typically the summer (July-Aug) water was reported as CLEAR and BROWN. This suggests that the Secchi depth may have been mostly impacted by tannins, stain from decaying matter. Tannins are natural and not a result of pollution. Tannins can be distinguished from suspended sediment because the water, even though it's brown, it looks clear, like tea. Though tannins are not harmful per se, they are often not perceived as aesthetically pleasing as clear water. Tannins can also be important for decreasing light penetration into the water and decreasing algal growth.

Chemistry data was collected on Little Sissabagama Lake - Deep Hole. The average summer Chlorophyll was 4.8 µg/l (compared to a Central Georegion summer average of 8.7 µg/l). The summer Total Phosphorus average was 15.7 µg/l. Lakes that have more than 20 µg/l and impoundments that have more than 30 µg/l of total phosphorus may experience noticeable algae blooms.

The overall Trophic State Index (based on chlorophyll) for Little Sissabagama Lake - Deep Hole was 47. The TSI suggests that Little Sissabagama Lake - Deep Hole was mesotrophic. Mesotrophic lakes are characterized by moderately clear water, but have a increasing chance of low dissolved oxygen in deep water during the summer.

## Wildlife Report

**Loons** - Anyone who took part in the Fourth of July boat parade likely was surprised by the new chick that nearly entered the parade on Gerlach Bay (in front of Corcoran's). The Fleming family members reported seeing the chick with it's mother soon after hatching, about July 2nd. The nest was on Manicure Island, well hidden from view. Later in the summer Julie Parroni reported that there was still an unhatched egg in the nest. As of September 23rd, the chick is still doing well, fishing in front of Johnson's cabins with one of its parents. It's nearly as big as its parent but greyer. The parent is beginning to molt around the face. Check out the LoonWatch website (part of Northland College) to learn more about Loons, their behavior (and calls), and the ecology that supports them. Interesting fact from that website: Wisconsin lakes are a summer home to approximately 4,000 adult loons. Learn more at: <https://www.northland.edu/centers/soei/loon-watch>

**Otters** - Quite a few folks have spotted a family of Otters on the east side of Isle of Pines recently. Interesting fact: Otters are the only animal that makes slide marks in the snow which provides the WI DNR a means for estimating otter counts (via aerial surveys). Approximate WI otter count in 2019 = 10,000.

**Ospreys** - The Osprey fledged at least two, possibly three chicks this year. Interesting facts from US Fish & Wildlife Service: Osprey incubate eggs for 1 month and make their first flight 60 days after hatching. After staying with their parents for up to 2 months, young osprey make their first migration alone, instinctively knowing where to go without following their parents.



Liam Griffith, an eight year old visitor from Kenya named the chick Survivor of the North.

**Why be a member?**

- To have voting rights at the twice a year general membership meetings.

**(Saturday of Memorial Day and Labor Day)**

- To share expenses accrued for meetings and communication between Lake Shore members (website, meeting room fees, etc.)
- To support attendance/representation at County and Statewide Lake Association Conferences/Meetings
- To share expenses accrued for stewardship of the lake (beaver dam removal, water quality monitoring, etc.)
- To support efforts to protect the lake, shorelines and wildlife.
- To share maintenance of funds for unforeseeable circumstances (legal, taxes, etc.)
- To protect your property investment by supporting conservation efforts to protect the lake in the common interest.

**Membership Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Property Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different than above) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Dues \$50/year Payable at Labor Day Meeting of Lake Association (or via mail). \_\_\_\_\_

(LSSOA is a 501c3 tax entity)

Additional donation \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

Check number \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to: LSSOA

Mail to: Ron Marquis, 9146 Jade Way N, Lake Elmo MN 55042

**Ballou family history on Little Sissabagama**

In the late 1800's, my Great Uncle Bill Ballou was living in Stone Lake, WI when he discovered Little Sissabagama. He convinced his flourishing attorney brothers, Ellis and Ben...my grandfather...to buy lakeshore property that was 268 miles from their homes in Fairmont, MN. With the help of men from the area, the cabin was built using only hand tools. The original cabin still stands in the same location along with the boat house but minus the "biff", as we called the outhouse. That is the cabin my parents, Bill and still Beebe Ballou, my sister Cynthia and my brother Ben and I used all the years we were growing up. My cousin Joy Poulakidas, who lives in Chicago, now owns the cabin with her two sons Nik and Brian. A favorite memory of cabin time is my dad getting up early in the morning, taking the rowboat fishing and coming back with enough crappies and sunnies for breakfast. He had a spot in the woods where he cleaned the fish while my sister and I fanned him with ferns to keep the bugs away. We rarely saw people other than an occasional fisherman. The Gerlach family was on the island and Haberkorn's had their place. According to an old map, other cabins were owned by the Ogren's, Hilt's and Serlay's. In 1964, my grandmother, Elma Ballou, sold 240 feet of lakeshore to my dad for \$1.00. Repeating history, my dad, my brother and cousin Brian (Joy's Dad), built our cabin with only hand tools. Our family cabin stands as sound and sturdy as it did when it was built 56 years ago. In the early days, we had no electricity, only kerosene lamps, a two-burner camp stove and no running water. We made lots of trips down the hill and back up with our buckets full of water for clean ups, and yes, even for coffee! We had a "biff" for many years with lots of interesting stories that we still talk about. When we finally had electricity, part of our routine included trips to Edgewater to get big blocks of ice for the "ice box" and water from a spring along the way. No doubt it is noticeable from the lake as to how our cabin has expanded. With my three daughters and their husbands...Molly and Zak Tomczak, Elizabeth and Chuck Pamperin, Stacey Degen and Brian Gaiser, grandchildren Alex, Cody and his wife Danielle, Samantha and Ryan, AND great grandson Callen, six dogs and one cat, expansion was necessary!! It can be complete chaos at times, but oh how we all love it and are so grateful to our family who, so long ago, found our beautiful Little Sissabagama. It's our place to connect with each other, laugh, work together, sit around the bonfire or on the deck and remember our Mom, Dad, Gram and Papa. Being there, they don't seem so far away.

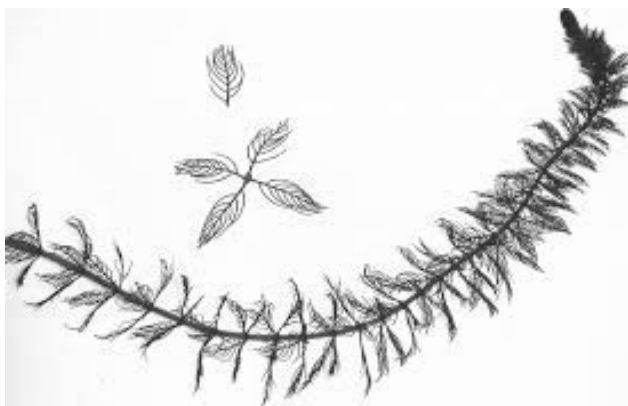
*Dianne Nelson*



3634N Boxing Camp Trail  
Stone Lake, WI 54876

Address Correction Requested

**Eurasian Milfoil** is an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) that is the scourge of many lakes in our area. It is so invasive that it can destroy native plants and choke out food sources and habitat for many native fish and other animals.



It can be introduced to a lake by a boater launching a boat or trailer that has pieces of the plant pirating a ride to find another lake to do its deeds. There are native milfoils that are similar in appearance, but if you see anything that you suspect may be Eurasian Milfoil, report it immediately before it has a chance to spread. Other lakes in the area, such as Lac Courte Orielles are spending a fortune trying to reduce its population with mixed results.

We welcome photos and other content you'd like to share with Lake Shore Association members in future issues. We intend to publish another issue in the spring. Email content to Anne or Jean.

Editor: Anne Skwira Brown  
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Visit the website to get the latest news as well as read the bylaws, minutes and other items relative to our lake.

**[www.littlesissabagama.org](http://www.littlesissabagama.org)**

For secure access to the member page enter the passcode: littlesiss