

A View from the Lake by Tom Schroeder, Oct. 17, 2018

Even though late Sept and October so far have been rainy with below normal temperatures, the explosion of color of the maples, aspen, oaks and other trees is painting the lakeshore and the country side. It is easy to understand why fall is a favorite time of the year for many residents. Even though we have to pull the boats, pontoons and other fun watercraft, along with the docks and lifts, in preparation for the weather to come, all we have to do is look back and remember the great summer we had on the Lake.

The BDLMD commissioners have had a chance to relax a bit the past few months before picking up the projects and challenges of the coming budget year. The commissioners are discussing continuing construction of "Healthy Lakes", "Fish Sticks" projects on the shoreline of Beaver Dam Lake. Grants from the WDNR are available to offset the cost of placing the "Fish Sticks". However, property owners must make the commitment to have the "Fish Sticks" placed on their property along with the obligation to develop at least 350 square feet of shoreline improvement and maintain the site for 10 years. Any property owner that is interested in the "Fish Stick" program should go to the Lake District website at [beaverdamlake.org](http://beaverdamlake.org) and send us an email on the in bedded link. The message will be forwarded to me. Be sure to include your address, phone number(s), and email address.

It appears that the treatment last spring for Eurasian Water Milfoil - EWM was quite successful. Very little EWM was observed floating on the surface during the summer. The July Aquatic plant survey and the follow-up survey in October will provide the data that will be the basis for the 2019 treatment plan. A major concern for a second year is the Fern Grass growth on much of the City Bay which is located north of the HYW. 48 bridge. Normally fern grass grows only a few feet from the bottom of the lake and does not canopy. The thick growth of this aquatic plant made for navigation problems for much of the summer. This problem will be an item for discussion at the 2019 treatment plan meeting that will occur in late Jan. 2019.

In a recent Lake Tides newsletter, I noticed a research article about wood ticks that was written by Michel Block, UW-Stevens Point student. He noted that since 1980 over 38,000 cases of Lyme's disease have been reported in Wisconsin. An estimated 75% of the cases were contacted in residential areas. Ticks aren't easy to stop as they can easily survive our frigid winters and can survive underwater for more than two weeks. The one noteworthy part of his article is that he found that simple wood chips are able to deter the pesky creature. Amazingly, wood ticks are reluctant to enter areas of wood chips as they get lost in the wood chips and dehydrate, so they avoid them altogether. Some plants like lavender, sage, or chrysanthemum, or strips of cedar mulch with cedar oil have also been suggested as tick deterrents. However, a thorough check of your clothes and body after being outside and knowing the warning signs of a tick bite are still your best prevention for avoiding tick related illnesses.

The County will again be lowering the lake by about 6 inches from the level that is normally maintained during the summer months. With the recent rains the lowering process may not reach the low level until possibly late Nov. A major reason for doing this is to reduce the effect of "ice jacking". When ice forms on the lake the dropping temperature causes the ice to contract. When the ice cracks, the cracks fill with water that then freezes. When the temperature of the ice rises the ice expands and there is no place for the ice to go but to push up onto the shoreline. As the ice continues to expand and contract during the winter there is a ratcheting effect which puts tremendous pressure on the shoreline. As an example, one mile of ice can expand almost 3 feet when the ice temperature goes from around 14F to

32F. The amazing thing is that this can happen within hours when no snow cover is present. There are natural benefits to the environment from “ice jacking” but that is a subject for a future article. For those interested in this subject check “ice jacking” on the internet.

Enjoy the fall color and all the fun things fall has to offer.