

BMLAA Newsletter Mission Statement

The mission of the newsletter is to provide lake area residents with information to build community. The newsletter is intended to present current lake issues in a non-controversial and positive format.

The State of the Lake 2021

Before starting to write this 'State of the Lake' I went back and read all of the past newsletters which are posted on the website. In doing so, it led me to these following key points.

THANK YOU!

Anyone who enjoys Bad Medicine Lake owes a large amount of gratitude to those who have helped to protect the lake. From protecting the lake from AIS, weed growth, erosion, planting trees, shore land development education, boating etiquette, etc..., the lake would not be what it is today without the blood, sweat and tears of those who helped to lead the BMLAA in the past. Much of what was written 5, 10, or 15 years ago is still true today as evidenced by the below excerpts from past newsletters.

- 2009 – Just 12 years ago we only had volunteers(THANK YOU!) conduction inspections at the landing. Now we have some of the best coverage in Minnesota but this does not come without a cost. To help keep Bad Medicine Lake AIS free the BMLAA needs donations to supplement funding from Becker County.
- *"In the meantime, I have spent considerable time on the phone with several folks from the DNR, begging and pleading for help and here is what they have come up with as a solution for us. They will train our volunteers for free, give us a couple of DNR hats and educational literature to pass out, but for the most part, we will staff our own public access this summer. We desperately need more volunteers to help cover the rest of the summer."*
- 2013 – It's taken consistent education on AIS prevention as well as best shoreland preservation practices to maintain the natural beauty of Bad Medicine Lake
- *'Another focus area for the BMLAA this year has been to develop an informational program about shoreland preservation and restoration. Because the quality of the water in Bad Medicine Lake is a direct result of the run-off from the land around the lake, it is important that this runoff contains only naturally occurring phosphorous and other pollutants.'*

As a wise man on the lake once said, 'While we all may have different opinions on how to enjoy the lake, everyone seems to understand how special Bad Medicine really is.' Truer words could not be spoken. Let's all once again say 'THANK YOU' to all of those who have done so much up until now and know it is up to all of us to do so into the future.

What is the purpose of the BMLAA and some Common Questions/Misconceptions:

- According to the BMLAA bylaws: "The purpose of the Association is to bring together the residents of the Bad Medicine Lake area to preserve and improve the quality of our water, land, air, aesthetics, wildlife and other natural resources of the Bad Medicine Lake area; to provide educational and training resources for the healthy enjoyment of present and future generations; and to work in conjunction with federal, state and local agencies, public and private, to further the purpose of the Association. The Association shall keep members informed of the status of the lake, the surrounding area, and the activities of the Association."

What DOES the BMLAA do?

- Supports all legal recreation on Bad Medicine Lake
- Works with Becker County on AIS prevention (i.e. inspectors at the landing and education)
- Supports Water Quality Studies
- Educates on topics pertinent to the lake (i.e. shoreland preservation/boating safety/etiquette/etc...).
- Offers Forest Township an avenue to communicate with residents.
- Coordinates road side clean up dates
- Etc...

What DOES the BMLAA NOT do?

- The Association has no formal power to make or enforce laws, rules or regulations. Those powers belong to government. The Association hopes to educate and encourage its members to act in a way that is friendly to the lake, their lake neighbors and the surrounding area.

Needs for the Future:

- One of the biggest needs of the BMLAA is engagement from a higher percentage of the residents. This could be as simple as becoming a member, making sure your neighbor is a member, keeping up on BMLAA topics, coming to meetings, volunteering, etc... The more members we have the more voices we have communicating how to keep Bad Medicine Lake as it is today into the future so our children and grandchildren can enjoy it. Also, both membership fees as well as donations are 100% directed towards bettering the Bad Medicine Lake Area.

Matt Hanson - BMLAA President

2021 SEE Committee Update

In 2020 the SEE Committee started out with a goal of educating boaters of better boating etiquette. In 2020 there was an informational sheet designed and dispersed amongst residents and renters. In 2021 this was taken to another level with a kiosk placed at the landing with the same information as well as handouts for boaters to take. While no amount of education will ever be perfect, each year this information is communicated will continue to build. Will it make everything perfect? Unfortunately not, but it has already lead to improvements and will continue to do so.

2021 Bad Medicine Lake AIS Inspection Facts

1. For 2021, Becker County budgeted Bad Medicine Lake for 700 hours of inspector time. 694 hours were used.
2. Between May 15 and September 6, AIS inspectors worked at the public access on 76 of 115 possible days (66%).
3. Boats were inspected when entering and when leaving Bad Medicine. The total number of inspections was 1453. 836 (57%) were at entry and 617 (43%) on exit.
4. Saturday, May 15th (fishing opener) was the busiest day with 79 inspections.
5. For the summer, Saturday was the busiest day of the week with 510 inspections followed by Sunday (380), Friday (217) and Thursday (159).
6. For the summer, weekly inspection numbers were fairly consistent from the fishing opener until the end of July and then dropped off in August.
7. Fishing boats accounted for 83% of inspections followed by pontoon boats (6%), runabouts/ski boats (6%), canoes/kayaks (2%), personal watercraft (2%), Jon boats (1%), wake boats (1%), docks/lifts (<1%) and sail boats (<1%).
8. State of registration was overwhelmingly Minnesota (82%) followed by North Dakota (13%), Wisconsin (1%) and then 18 other states totaling about 4%.
9. For the 2021 inspection season, only 7 of 836 (.84%) of the boats entering Bad Medicine were found to have drain plugs in place on arrival. State law requires plugs to be out during transport.
10. No zebra mussels were detected by inspectors in 2021.
11. No referrals for boat or trailer decontamination were made from the Bad Medicine public access in 2021.

AIS Inspection and Prevention on Bad Medicine Lake:

For several years, the primary AIS prevention effort on Bad Medicine Lake has been watercraft inspections at the public access. This is a state funded program administered by Becker County which has responsibility for hiring, training, scheduling and supervising the inspectors. In the last few years, Bad Medicine has been budgeted to receive 700 hours of inspector time at \$14 per hour. If the amount budgeted is not used it is "banked" for use on Bad Medicine at some future time. If inspector time exceeds the amount budgeted, the lake association is billed for the excess. BMLAA has an AIS Fund made up of member donations specifically designated for fighting AIS and those funds remain available for use. It should be noted that Forest Township played an important role in covering excess inspection costs (\$2500) in 2020 and may be a partner for future AIS funding.

The summer AIS inspection season runs from the fishing opener (mid-May) through Labor Day, approximately 115 days. If inspectors were present each of those 115 days, 700 hours translates to 6 inspection hours per day, leaving significant gaps in coverage. However, historical data indicates that the greatest number of inspections occur at certain times of the season (mid-May to some time in August), on certain days of the week (Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun) and at certain times of the day (earlier rather than later). For those reasons, inspectors have typically been scheduled to be present during peak usage times and the 700 total hours has been close to meeting the need. In 2020, the BMLAA Board requested an increase in the hours of inspection, specifically during mid-week days that had been previously receiving little or no attention.

While the AIS inspection program at the public access probably inspects most of the non-resident boats launched on the lake, it should be kept in mind that the maximum amount of inspection on even a busy day is about 10 hours (6am to 4pm), leaving potentially busy time periods before 6am and after 4pm uninspected. In addition, boats are regularly launched at resorts and from private properties around the lake. It seems reasonable to believe that a significant number of new boat launches in Bad Medicine Lake are uninspected.

While, undoubtedly, the great majority of boaters launching at Bad Medicine understand and follow both the letter and spirit of the AIS regulations, in 2020, inspectors found zebra mussels present on two boat trailers about 10 days apart in the month of June. Both boats had recently launched at an infested lake in Becker County. Close calls like these bring home the reality that AIS is a very real threat to Bad Medicine Lake. The reality is that many lakes in Becker County are AIS-infested. The reality is that many popular fishing lakes in Minnesota are AIS-infested. The reality is that it is very easy to take a boat to Leech Lake today and to Bad Medicine tomorrow. The reality is that the purchase and transport of used docks or lifts poses a significant risk of AIS transmission unless the equipment is properly dried before installation as required by law. The reality is that it only takes one exposure to bring zebra mussels to Bad Medicine Lake.

For these reasons, the BMLAA Board is giving serious thought about how to optimize Bad Medicine's AIS inspection and prevention plan for 2022. In addition to inspections, such a plan might include educational and awareness efforts, a monitoring/early detection effort and an attempt to determine how much boat launch use the public access receives during times when inspectors are not present.

As with any prevention plan, practical considerations and costs must be evaluated alongside possible benefits. That is the process the board and the membership will undertake over the next several months and into the future as we seek to improve Bad Medicine's AIS protection plan.

8 Tips from Becker County Soil & Water

1. Apply Fertilizer Sparingly. Use Zero-Phosphorus Lawn Fertilizer

It's the Law in Minnesota. By law since 2005, Minnesota homeowners cannot use fertilizers containing phosphorus, except for exemptions for new lawns or when a soil test indicates a need for phosphorus. In much of Becker County, soils are naturally high in phosphorus so lawns generally don't need extra phosphorus. When shopping for fertilizer, buy a brand that has a middle number of zero i.e. 22-0-15.

2. Locate Fire Pits Away from the Shore and Dispose of Ash

The leftover ash from burning wood is very high in phosphorus. If the fire pit is located near the lake, rain can wash the ashes into the lake. Locate the fire pit at least 50 feet away from the lake; and, remove ashes from the fire pit to prevent the phosphorus-loaded ashes from being blown or washed into the lake.

3. Reduce Rainwater Runoff... It Doesn't Go Away!

What is runoff? Rainwater or snowmelt that does not soak into the ground and instead runs off hard surfaces that don't absorb water (impervious surfaces) or washes off lawns and steep slopes is called runoff. Impervious surfaces include roofs, driveways, sidewalks, and compacted soils. When the runoff reaches the lake, it can carry with it nutrients, eroded soil sediments, toxic materials, bacteria and other pollutants that can cause reduced water clarity, increased aquatic plants and algae, and impact fish and wildlife habitat. What was once an occasional cabin along a wild shore has become a ribbon of structures and paved areas circling the lakes. All this construction has added more rooftops, roads, walkways, decks, parking areas and driveways, increasing the amount of impervious surfaces, which act like funnels for runoff to reach lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Runoff from these impervious surfaces also increases erosion and sedimentation. Managing runoff on your property is the best way to reduce pollutants before they reach the lake. Increasing opportunities for water to soak into the ground (infiltrate) instead of running off is the best way to reduce runoff and filter out the pollutants before they reach the lake. Learn From Mother Nature With the natural water cycle, when there is precipitation, water will evaporate, run off the land, or soak (infiltrate) into the ground. The amount of vegetative cover on the ground will determine the amount of runoff and infiltration. Natural vegetation will hold back the runoff providing time for it to soak into the ground.

4. Maintain Natural Vegetation

Vegetation will naturally reduce runoff by holding back the water to provide time for it to soak into the ground. When clearing your lot, minimize the removal of wooded areas, trees and low growing shrubs. Their removal causes more rain to fall to the ground instead of landing on leaves and branches. Grading large areas of land removes the natural depressions of land where water can pond and soak in. Carefully landscape your yard near roads, driveways, and along the shoreline to direct runoff away from the lake. Practice Good Lawn Management Maintain a Healthy Lawn to Absorb More Water. Leave the suburban lawn mentality in the cities. Limit the amount of lawn and keep it as natural as possible to reduce maintenance and increase its ability to absorb runoff. Mow to a height of two to three inches; mow when dry to prevent clumping. Taller grass provides shade for better root growth, which helps with water absorption. If watering is necessary, water deeply, but infrequently, to encourage deep root growth. Water with lake water. (Hint: use the nutrients in the lake to make a healthy lawn instead of frequent fertilizer applications.) Water in the morning, not mid-day or evening. In hot weather, allow lawn grasses to go dormant so that they require less water and nutrient intake for survival.

5. Install a Rain Barrel

A rain barrel is any type of container used to catch water flowing from a downspout and store it for later use.

6. Plant a Rain Garden

A rain garden is just what it sounds like—a garden to soak up rain water. It is a recessed planting bed, shaped like a saucer or shallow bowl, designed to collect runoff from driveways, roofs, and other hard surface or sheet flow of rain from lawns. The collected water is then infiltrated into the ground instead of running off to the lake.

7. Buffer the Lake from Runoff

Scientific research shows that the way we treat our shorelines affects lake water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. To protect and improve our lakes, we need to improve our shorelines. The best way we can do that is by adding or keeping a buffer strip of natural vegetation along the shore. Buffer strips of native species of trees, shrubs, and understory plants protect water quality and provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

8. What is a shoreland buffer zone?

A buffer zone is an unmowed strip of native vegetation that extends both lakeward and landward from the water's edge. A buffer zone of native plants that extends 25-50 feet landward from the shore is preferable, but even adding a buffer as narrow as 10-15 feet can restore many functions critical to the health of the lake that may have been eliminated previously by sod, hard structures, or mowing. When it comes to shoreland buffers, wider is better for more benefits.

2021 Lake Level Update:

If there are two words to describe Summer 2021 they would be 'dry' and 'hot'. The lake level as of Sept 7th 2021 was 1594.57 compared to 1595.83 on Sept 9th 2020 which equates to the lake being down approximately 15" in the last year. The lowest recorded level was 1591.18 in 1993 which would mean the lake would need to drop over 3'. I'm sure some with shallow water access would prefer the lake to stay at its current level.

Forest Township Update

With summer behind us, we enter the fall season with leaves coloring and weather cooling. One of the best times of the year.

It has certainly been a dry summer. Thank you all for being conscious of the fire hazards resulting from the dry weather and refraining from unnecessary burning.

We held our two amnesty days over the summer with success. We had four bins in the spring and three in the fall. We were able to handle the waste that was brought in to the dump without having to turn anyone away.

We started the summer with a serious Bear problem at the dump. The problem only happens when people do not properly dispose of their garbage and that proved to be a serious problem earlier in the summer. Several of us have had to monitor the dump and move garbage to the empty bins. We have plenty of bins. People just need to take a couple more steps to get to the empty bins. PLEASE, dispose of your garbage properly.

We have also had trouble with illegal dumping. We do not want junk left next to the bins or inappropriate materials placed in the bins. The dumpsters are for household waste only. Please abide by these regulations.

Roads have been a challenge this summer with the dry conditions. Now that we have had some rain, we have started upgrading the roadways. We have been able to reclaim gravel from the ditches and started graveling roads where the gravel is needed. This process will continue through the fall.

There were several building permits issued this summer. We want to thank everyone for working with the township when needed. A reminder, that a township permit is needed when construction occurs in the conservation district, 267 feet from the highwater level.

On behalf of the Forest Township Board, we hope you have a good fall and winter.

Lynn Lindow

Keep the Bad Medicine Sky Dark

There are so many reasons we love Bad Medicine Lake: It's a sanctuary and an escape. It's natural, quiet, peaceful, serene. It's a magical and spiritual place. It heals and soothes. At night, Bad Medicine offers a quiet, open, dark space that gives us privacy, the feeling of wilderness and an opportunity to enjoy the heavens and the stars. Balancing the need to see at night with the desire to preserve the pristine beauty of the dark night is the goal of a sensible approach to artificial lighting at the lake.

So let's consider shoreline lighting and how to keep Bad Medicine Lake as naturally dark as possible at night. Artificial lighting allows us to engage in nighttime activities that would be impossible or difficult under normal nighttime conditions. It enhances our sense of safety and security. Whether it's simply sitting on the porch to read or walking safely down to the dock to watch the stars, our enjoyment of the night is enhanced by the wise use of artificial light.

Giving thought to the impact of our lighting on our lake neighbors can help to minimize the three most serious lighting problems along our shoreline:

- 1) **Glare:** When we see a distant point of light across the water, when we see a light from the fixture itself rather than what the fixture is meant to illuminate, we are observing glare. Poorly designed, poorly installed and/or poorly aimed lighting can hamper the vision of others while spoiling the natural darkness and mood of the lake.
- 2) **Light Trespass:** Light trespass refers to light from one property that also illuminates another property in an unwanted way. This is not a legal concept but rather a description of the nuisance effect of improperly aimed or overly bright lights and the visibility of those lights from another's property. Yard lights on automatic timers are particular offenders. Calm water reflects glare from shoreline lights causing frustration for nighttime boaters and property owners hoping to enjoy the dark.
- 3) **Sky Glow:** We are all familiar with the reflected light in the night sky that surrounds big cities. Much exterior lighting shines upward causing the sky glow effect. Even at Bad Medicine we can easily see the sky glow above Fargo. We all enjoy the beautiful dark skies at Bad Medicine Lake. Let's all try to minimize sky glow.

Please consider the following lighting tips:

- Do a nighttime survey of your personal lighting from the water and consider how it might affect your Bad Medicine neighbors both nearby and at a distance.
- Initiate a conversation with your friends and neighbors about lighting issues.
- Turn off outdoor lights on your cabin, lot and shoreline except when needed.
- Provide adequate lighting for your purpose but avoid excessively bright or misdirected light.
- Eliminate or reduce glare, the most common lighting problem, by shielding fixtures and aiming light away from the water and neighboring property.
- Retrofit existing light fixtures (outdoor or indoor) with shields to reduce glare.
- Avoid dusk to dawn security yard lights.
- Avoid automatic eye yard lights on a pole.

Developing a shared sense of lighting etiquette on Bad Medicine Lake will involve working with our neighbors. Some may have considered this problem while others may not have thought about it at all. Lighting education is the first step.

Eliminating lighting problems on Bad Medicine Lake is important. We human beings lose some essential part of ourselves when we can no longer experience natural darkness or look up and wonder about our place in the universe.

Let's all work together to keep the Bad Medicine sky dark!

Jon Wanzek

Roadside Cleanup

Our Spring Roadside Cleanup was a huge success. Turnout was the best in memory and the weather was great. Thanks to all who participated. You made it very easy.

As a reminder, The Bad Medicine Lake Area Association and the Bad Medicine Lake Foundation are responsible for the cleanup of approximately 5 1/2 miles along Highway 37. We do this twice per year in the Spring and Fall. We divide the 5 1/2 miles into half-mile sections. Each person or group is asked to cover one of those sections on both sides of the highway. This generally only takes 30 - 45 minutes and ends up being a rewarding way to enjoy a portion of the morning.

When turnout is good, such as it was this Spring, that's all there is to it. But, if turnout lags, then we all pitch in and do another section or two and it takes a bit longer. So, we sure hope you will join us again this Fall on October 9th.

Remember, we provide gloves and garbage bags, so all you have to do is show up ready to pick up. And you never know what you may find. It can be like a treasure hunt. Karen even found a \$50 bill one time.

Hope to see you there.

John La Fond

Nextdoor

Holding on to something you no longer want or need but it's too good to throw away?

To offer an item for sale or to give away, post a photo and/or description on Nextdoor and there's a good chance one of your Bad Medicine neighbors will give those size 11 waders a new home. A much better alternative than a trip to the dump!

Linda Bentson

Under the Surface: SCUBA Diving at BML

Bad Medicine is well known as a great SCUBA diving lake. The high underwater visibility and great depth are two of its main attractions. My family and I have been diving on Bad Medicine for five decades. For many years in the 1970s and early 1980s, the open water season began with the Bad Medicine Dive Bash held over Memorial Day Weekend. Hundreds of SCUBA divers from around the region would come to the lake participating in underwater scavenger hunts, spear fishing, and lake bottom clean up. The family tradition of diving Bad Medicine continues. All my kids are divers and I hope my grandkids will pursue their certification as soon as they are able.

Many people wonder what it is like diving in Bad Medicine. There are many sensations divers experience that are not felt on the surface. The water is often colder than the air and that is the reason we wear wet suits or dry suits. In mid-July the water temperature on the surface may approach 80 degrees Fahrenheit however, it can cool off quickly. Around 25 to 30 feet down is the first thermocline – a noticeable and sharp drop in temperature into the 60s or lower. Common surface sounds (wind, birds, people) are absent. The high pitch whine of a boat motor propeller can be heard a mile away. But to get the attention of your dive buddy you might have to bang rocks together which sounds like fingers snapping. The loudest noise is the sound of the air flowing through the regulator and the exhaled bubbles. The visibility in Bad Medicine is generally very good and it's not unusual to see 20 feet or more.



Ingrid Altenburg enjoying a dive.



Karl Altenburg being visited by a bass.

continued ...

This is unlike many lakes in Minnesota. Colors are muted as sunlight is filtered through the water. The waves on the surface refract the light in many directions and the patterns dance across the bottom. In general, it is a peaceful, quiet environment unlike anything on the surface.

The bottom of Bad Medicine varies in texture and composition. In many sites near the shore, the bottom is rocky to sandy. Bark, branches, and cones of Jack Pines litter the bottom. Much of the bottom at depths below 40 feet is a fine silt. Great black clouds are created in the paths of divers who swim too close to this muddy substrate. Another attraction of our lake are the many artifacts left behind from the loggers a century ago. One can find giant chains, axes, picks, wagon wheels, and saws. Of course, there are old ice fishing houses, little row boats, stray docks, fishing lures galore, and plenty of old beer bottles and cans. Many of these objects become habitat for the underwater animals and plants.

The fish of Bad Medicine are curious and friendly. In the last decade, the Smallmouth Bass appears to be among the more common fish to follow us on our dives. They have figured out that divers stir up crayfish which the bass happily eat whole. Yellow perch often swim along within arm's length. Great schools of small, juvenile fish can be seen closer to shore. Crayfish, once ubiquitous on the bottom, are now found mostly hiding under logs and out of sight of the bass. When they are seen in the open, they raise their claws for a menacing effect but shoot away backways if approached. Eelpout are often found lying motionless on the bottom and at great depth. In a recent dive, my son and I found a small eelpout resting under an old tin lid. They seem rather unafraid of any visitors. Northern Pike are another motionless fish, frequently encountered on night dives. After a few moments of inspection, they speed off in a blink of an eye. Occasionally we encounter turtles and rarely a loon.

One of the few detractors from SCUBA diving is the time to get gear on and the limited bottom time. A SCUBA tank holds about one hour of air depending on the diver. And although divers become seemingly weightless (neutrally buoyant) underwater, it is cumbersome and uncomfortable on the surface with 50 extra pounds of equipment while wearing a hot wetsuit. Snorkeling is another option to visit the underwater world. An investment in fins, mask, and snorkel is great way to see Bad Medicine from a whole new perspective. In fact, most of the colorful fish are active in the first few feet of water.

As a reminder to those on the surface, according to the 2021 Minnesota Boating Guide, boats not involved with the diving operation must remain 150 feet away from a dive flag. Dive flags are red with a white diagonal stripe. It's never a good feeling to see a boat prop spinning overhead as you ascend to the surface.

Karl Altenburg

Kurt Altenburg

The North Country Trail

By: Alia Johnson, Horseshoe Rd

My family and I love to hike on the North Country Trail about every weekend. One time, while hiking the trail, we came upon some painted rocks. One of my favorite rocks that I found had the word "calm" painted on a lake landscape. After we saw the rocks we decided that we are going to put painted rocks on some of the trails too. So far we put some rocks on the trail that heads west from the south entrance of Itasca State Park. We also found a cool walking stick that was carved to fit your hand.

How about I share with you some cool facts about the North Country Trail! Did you know that the North Country Trail is 35 years old! That's pretty cool if you think about it. To complete the whole hike of the North Country Trail, it will take you about 7 to 9 months! Here are the states that the NCT passes through. North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and last but not least New York. (Gasp!) That is a long Trail!! Okay, you might be wondering "does her family hike the whole thing?" The answer is NO! You know what, I don't know how many miles we got in but we walked for about an hour. By my count, there are 8 trailheads just 5 short minutes from the Bad Medicine public landing. I really recommend going for a hike on the North Country Trail. I mean, who knows... you might find a little painted rock along your way!





The Storm

By: Avi Johnson, Horseshoe Rd

Crash! Bang! Snap! The tree lets it's GIANT branch tumble to the ground.....wait lets back it up a little bit. Alia and I were swimming in the lake when the sky suddenly darkened. The wind was not blowing, it was absolutely silent. My dad came out of the cabin and yelled for us. He said that there was going to be a great big storm heading our way. We ran out of the water and rushed to pick EVERYTHING up from around the house or it would be gone by tonight.

The wind started picking up around 2:30 that day, and the sky went full out 10 pm on us. We grabbed everything on the beach, on the deck, in the backyard, and basically everywhere. Once everything was in the garage, we went inside to change when our mom asked us if we had seen our dog Teddy anywhere. We said we didn't and ran back outside to look for him. "Teddy?!, Teddy?!" We screamed... nothing. We did a few fast laps around the house to realize that he was nowhere to be found.

Alia and I went back in the house when I realized that I forgot my shoes outside, so I ran to the three season porch to see Teddy staring off in the distance in the backyard. I looked back there to see a GIANT snapper laying in our yard. I grabbed Teddy and yelled for my mom and Alia. They came outside and we all went to investigate the turtle. There was an abandoned stick laying on the ground that we grabbed to poke the turtle. It snapped hard a couple of times and snapped the stick right in two!

We decided to go inside when it started to pour and the turtle had gone into its shell. I heard a Crash! Bang! Snap! A giant tree let's its huge branch tumble to the ground!! (Remember this) I yelled my mom's name and pulled her arm before a tree branch hit the ground with a thunk right where my mom was standing 2 seconds before! I saved her from getting severely injured. At the end of the day I looked at the radar and everything was cleared and long gone... Hallelujah!!

The Missing Phone

By: Payton Hanson - 10

One night my family and I were at the lake and we went on our pontoon. We went to our friend's cabin and tried out their new zipline. It was really fun and I went a lot of times, but everyone wanted me to try a backflip off of it. That was a little too scary for me, but I would have tried if it wasn't so shallow. Then my dad tried to do it and it was hilarious. When he did it the first time, he hit his back so hard it was like a bellyflop but a back flop. Then he tried again which is normally what dads do. When he was in the air something black flew and sank to the bottom of the lake fast. Everyone thought it was the handle of the zipline because it was gone when they pulled the zipline back up with a rope. When we got back to our cabin he started to ask everyone where his phone was but no one had seen it. The next morning, we went over to our friend's cabin again and we asked if they knew where it was, but they didn't. Good thing we brought are goggles with though!! My friend that was staying at our cabin came with me in the water. He was in the shallow and I was in the deep part. I looked and I saw a black rectangle so I yelled "I found it!". I quickly swam down and got my dad's phone!! His phone still worked even though it was in the water for 14 hours. He was so happy that I found it, and he even got me a huge container of vanilla ice cream.



Winning Bets Against My Dad

By: Brooklyn Hanson - 15

It was a calm evening on the lake so my dad and I decided to go out surfing. A 360 is something I've done on my board, but it's not something I had conquered yet. I swam out for my first set and went for a 360. I was there, but I fell back at the end. The next time my dad and I made a bet that if I got a 360 on this round he would buy me a pair of shoes that I wanted. So I went back out, I got up, threw the rope, and spun, then BOOM! A new pair of shoes. I went up for my 3rd round set and my dad put up his phone to video it. I got up, threw the rope, went for it and fell back (it was a very dramatic fall). I kept trying and finally it was my 6th and final round of the set. I had done a couple of fails that night. My dad put the phone away and said 2 pairs of shoes if you get a 360 on this round. So I got up, threw the rope took a deep breath then BOOM! Again I did it. After I did two of them, it felt pretty easy and now I feel like it's something I can do over and over. That's what I called a complete night on the boat, and 2 new pairs of shoes on my feet.

BAD MEDICINE LAKE AREA ASSOCIATION

MARGE LORENTZSEN
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Minnesota Conservation Volunteer

The DNR's bi-monthly magazine, Conservation Volunteer, is free to anyone who requests it.

You also can make a tax-deductible donation to cover costs.

The magazine engages, entertains, and educates readers with a lively mix of photographs and stories about Minnesota's woods, waters and wildlife.

It is written for all age levels.

You can subscribe or give as a gift, at:

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteer/index.html>

or by writing to:

Minnesota Conservation Volunteer

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St. Paul, MN 55155