



From the President by Eric Webster

It's good to be back on the lake. I hope that this newsletter finds our membership in good health and able to visit the lake as their schedule allows. I apologize for the tardiness of the newsletter this year. It is my first time putting it together, and I was late arriving on the lake due to concerns about potentially bringing the novel coronavirus from my home state.

A further casualty of the pandemic is cancellation of the Burntside Lake Association annual meeting. It is an event I look forward to; there are many people I see there that I seldom see elsewhere during the season. The annual meeting also provides me the opportunity to meet many new people, often friends and neighbors of prior acquaintances. At the BLA Spring Board Meeting (held over Zoom, a BLA first), we discussed how we might conduct our business at an in-person meeting while adhering to public health protocols and best practices. The Board determined that it was in the interest of our membership to postpone our meeting until next year, and conduct our business in 2021. When the venue for the annual meeting, Vermilion Community College, announced that the campus would remain closed through the summer, it confirmed our plans for us. The Board is allowed to make appointments to fill vacancies in between elections, and we have voted to retain all officers and representatives in their positions until next year. To be sure this is an unprecedented step; these times are uncharted for all of us.

There are more minor changes at the BLA. At the annual meeting last August, Ward Nelson handed over the reins of the BLA presidency to me. As far as anyone who tracks such things appears to know, I am the first President of the Burntside Lake Association to live on one of its many islands. As a relative newcomer



Vintage boat on a fall morning. Photo Judy Krish

to Burntside (having purchased the island in 2011), I wasn't present for many of the issues that divided the membership – and the greater lake community – farther in the past. I am humbled by the support that past and present Board members and the general membership have provided me, and I will do my best to honor your trust.

This newsletter would not be possible without the support of the advertisers on these pages. I encourage you to support these businesses when you go into town, just as they support us in getting this into the hands of each and every property owner on the lake. If you are not presently a member of the Burntside Lake Association I hope that you will consider joining. Our purpose is “to enhance, promote and protect the interest of property owners on Burntside Lake and the immediate watershed thereof; to protect the environment thereof; and to contribute to the recreational, social, and civic welfare of the community.” That is it. We do not share our membership list with any other agency or business.

Broadband Options on Burntside

Rurals areas such as ours on Burntside are historically underserved by high-speed internet connections, collectively termed “broadband” due to the cost of bringing infrastructure to our area. Fortunately, there have been improvements in the past few years in the number and quality of options available to us here. Please keep in mind that the options are ever-evolving, and that this article is merely a snapshot of what appears to be available presently.

One of the more challenging aspects to broadband is determining how much bandwidth is needed. Is streaming contemplated? How many simultaneous users will be using the connection? Often, there is a period of experimentation to learn what plan best suits the needs of the location.

For those who have landline service to their homes already, DSL (digital subscriber line) is an obvious choice. DSL runs over standard telephone wire, though older telephone wiring may need to be upgraded to current standards to make it work. A DSL modem and wireless router is typically provided by the vendor. Frontier-net is the local service provider for DSL in the Ely area. Costs and promotional discounts vary, depending on the service area, time of year, and the amount of bandwidth needed. Best for locations already served with a landline, where cell phone reception is poor.

For those who do not have landline service, satellite service is also available. ViaSat is available from Exede (sold through Voltz Electronics in Ely) and also from Northland Connect (a partner of Lake Country Power). The satellite dish must point to the southern sky, so there are some locations on the lake where getting a line of sight in that direction will prove very challenging. Again, prices and promotions vary by vendor and the amount of bandwidth needed. Best for locations not served by landline telephone connections with a line of sight to the southern sky.

Wireless internet is becoming increasingly available in the Ely area. Signals are beamed from towers to various repeaters as well as to small antennas at the customer site. Local startup Treehouse Internet is in the process of bringing this technology to Burntside. Several commercial sites have already signed up, and they are in

the process of expanding their coverage to include islands and on-shore locations as well. Best for: locations with a line of sight to the next nearest repeater, whether on shore or an island.

Finally, some Burntsiders use their cell phone connection to create a wi-fi “hotspot” at their property. This works well in locations that have good cell phone reception. “Power users” may find that they exceed the limits of their data plans. Best for locations with good cellular phone reception and limited need for bandwidth-intensive applications, like streaming video.



Loon chicks with parent. Photo Judy Krish

Loon Count

The Loon Count is conducted the first Saturday in August each year. The lake is divided into zones, with one search party conducting an inventory of all adult and juvenile loons in that zone. Numbers are reported back to a coordinator who can then record totals for the lake. All that is required is a pair of binoculars and availability for that one day.

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Photographer Profile

Special thanks are due to Judy Krish, who has generously agreed to provide a few of her favorite photographs of Burntside to liven the pages of this newsletter.


A complete biography of Judy would be impossible to contain in this space, but chances are one is unnecessary; everyone seems to know her already. It's hard to go anywhere in Ely with Judy without running into her friends or cousins. One of the children she used to babysit for on the lake (now a fellow Burntsider) has dubbed her "The Queen of Burntside".

Judy's first home was on the lake, and according to legend, she was delivered from the hospital to a log cabin on its shores in February on the back of a sled. When she was a child, her parents prudently purchased an island on the West End of the lake and built a cabin on it. She spent her childhood summers exploring with friends, camping and picnicking, boating and canoeing the lake from one end to the other. Though Judy left Ely to live elsewhere (actually, several to many "elsewheres") for a while, she always returned to her island for the summer. Eventually she moved into the house her mother built, and now winters in Ely and continues to summer on the island.



Summer water-lily blossom. Photo Judy Krish

Judy is a marvelous storyteller, historian of the lake (and Ely in general) and of course (as I'm sure you will agree) a keen observer of Burntside's flora, fauna, and geology. Despite her soft-spoken and gentle nature, she is as rugged as any person you will find. There is no one I would place more confidence in crossing the lake at night, in foul weather or fair. And there is no face I look forward to seeing more each spring.



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On Being a Good Neighbor

Larry Smith could be found most summer days sitting in the open doors of his boathouse near the Van Vac boat ramp. Sadly, he passed away last year. He left behind some wonderful quotes, some too colorful to include in this space. One thing he said to me a couple of summers ago sticks with me: "You know what makes Burntside the best lake? The people!" And I have found that to be the case. I have come to know and appreciate people here that I cannot imagine getting to know under any other circumstance.

Complaints about noise, lights, and boats throwing off large wakes are perennial as the raspberry bushes on Burntside. Much of the blame is assigned to new arrivals to the lake who either don't know better or are here for such a short period that they simply don't care how their behavior affects others on the lake. Other people spend enough time here that they really should know better.

Surely there must be a reason why some folks need to leave their outdoor lights on all night. What they may not realize is that the view from the opposite shoreline is diminished, or that the light shines directly in someone else's window. One of these days I'll get around to asking my neighbors why their boathouse light remains on all night. At this point were it not on I might think something was wrong!

Per the Minnesota DNR, it is illegal to "operate a watercraft so its wash or wake endangers, harasses, or interferes with any person or property". When I operate a boat close to shore, sometimes I observe what effect my wake has on the shoreline. I'm often surprised by

my impact, and I try to be more mindful next time.

Some boats are designed to create a large wake. These boats are appropriate for only the largest open areas on Burntside. People operating these boats must be especially careful when passing docks. I have on a couple of occasions seen them throwing off a wake that certainly interferes with the property of another person.

I am very fortunate that my immediate neighbors are usually careful not to throw up too large of a wake near my dock, but occasionally someone I know (but more often a stranger) will buzz the dock and (hopefully unknowingly) cause my tied up boats to bounce up out of the water. A neighbor of mine once had to push her pontoon boat off her dock when a speedboat raced by. Islands, especially islands with narrow channels adjacent to them, are particularly vulnerable to wakes. Sometimes, novice boaters don't know how to properly trim the boat and they create a bigger wake than is necessary. Other times, people just seem to want to go fast and they don't care what effect they are having on their neighbors' boats and docks.

It may be naive on my part to think that as visitors spend more time here, they will tend to become more sensitive to how their actions affect others on the lake. As vacation rentals become more commonplace, my hope is that landlords will inform their guests to be especially careful close to shore and around islands.

MN DNR Boating and Water Recreation Regulations: <https://tinyurl.com/yd7qar85>

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Burntside Lake Data Collection Efforts

The Burntside Lake Association maintains a repository of various lake data on our website burntside.org.

We encourage our members to get involved in any of these efforts, and many of them are fun for the whole family to participate in.

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Canoeing the Burntside River



John Tjostem, Phil Voxland and Tim Sundquist at one of the Burntside River's "carry-over" portages. Photo Judy Krish

By Phil Voxland

The Burntside river begins in Outlet Bay, where a rock dam was placed that lifted the lake level 3-4 feet. This was done to float cut logs through the bay and down the Burntside River. Now there is a small private walking bridge crossing the top of the rock dam from one side to the other.

The river meanders idyllically, passing a few homes and a public access from a parking area on Wolf Lake Road. This access includes a boardwalk which in high water times sometimes is either floating or submerged. (This is a clue that you should think twice about canoeing the river that day).

The river course straightens out and passes alongside the DNR fish rearing ponds. As it continues, dead-fall crossing the channel may or may not get in the way. **WARNING:** a second rock dam, if there is high volume of water flowing, gives strong cross currents that may be hazardous. Canoeing through the vegetation towards the northern river bank above the dam has to be considered. A few years ago a portage was cleared along that bank and down past the dam and rapids.

Despite possible deadfall, the slight down river rapids are not too challenging. Once past that area, the river broadens out into slow flowing bends in a scenic area, well worth experiencing.

One remaining rock dam, more of a pull over, remains; it is a quick in and out. From that point on to Shagawa Lake the river has oxbows that lead eventually under the Knuuti bridge, the County 88 Bridge and the aqueduct that carries water to Ely for drinking. Superb scenery, ideal for Trumpeter swan spotting, and more.

I often recommend a little out and back trip for inexperienced canoeists (I am one), Just put in at the County 88 Bridge and head west, going over the little pull over and enjoy the sheltered beautiful Burntside river and surroundings. Alternatively, head east to Shagawa and return to the bridge (or cross the lake and meet someone at Stoney Ridge Resort for a total hamburger experience before making your way back up the river).

Either way through the clear water, submerged logs that never made all the way to the sawmills can still be seen.

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Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force

The BLA's AIS Task Force trains sentries on the lake to look out for invasive plants and animals, which if left unchecked could devastate the lake's ecology. Volunteers keep an eye out for invasives around their own property and other places on the lake they frequent. If something suspicious is found, volunteers alert Dectectors, who are trained to distinguish between invasives and non-invasive species. If necessary, the Detector can report to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources the presence of AIS. Contact for this program is Reynold Mack. (Please see "Burntside Flora & Fauna Need Your Help" in this issue.)

The Burntside Lake Association website serves as a repository for ice on and off data. To prevent inconsistency in how ice off and ice on data are collected, one person uploads the data on behalf of the lake, and this becomes the "official" date. Various graphs show a clear trendline in the direction of more open water days on the lake over the years.

Please check our datasets, back issues of the newsletter, and much more at burntside.org.

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We are all approachable and glad to discuss Burntside with you, and we try our best to keep informed on projects going on in our areas. If you need contact information for a particular representative, please feel free to email Eric Webster mayoreric@gmail.com or call or text 505-410-1694. (Unfamiliar numbers go to voicemail, text messages typically get a quicker response).

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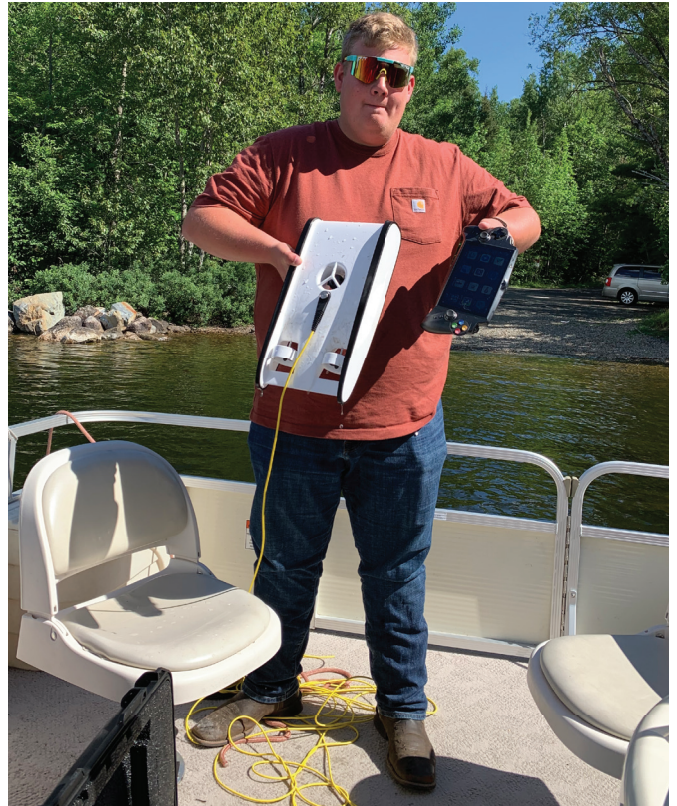
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In addition to volunteers, the AIS Task Force partners with Vermilion Community College to collect data on Burntside. Here, Lucas Caldwell poses with an underwater drone and controller used to scan "hotspots" on the lake where invasives are likely to show up. The drone makes a wonderful fish finder, as several good-size bass were spotted!



Water Clarity

Burntside Lake Association members participate in the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's water clarity program. Secchi Disks are lowered into the water at specific locations on specific days to gauge the clarity of the water. Participants upload the data to the MPCA website directly via an Excel spreadsheet. Please refer to the MPCA Citizen Lake Monitoring Program at <https://tinyurl.com/WaterClarity> for more information.

Burntside Flora & Fauna Need Your Help

The BLA Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force was formed in 2015 by a small group of Burntside Lake property owners concerned with the spread of additional AIS into Burntside Lake. 2020 is our fifth year of operation and fourth year of partnership with St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District. Our program is funded by St. Louis County AIS grant funds.

We are looking for some energetic new members (families and/or individuals) to join our group to help us fight AIS for the 2021 season and beyond!

We are currently seeking volunteers to help with the following:

- Assist in developing a 5 year AIS prevention plan for Burntside Lake. What else should we be doing to protect our lake? Are you planning to be come to the lake in the future? Help us protect it?

- Aid in the continued AIS Educational program for Burntside and the Ely Area. Not everyone who comes to Burntside lives on Burntside. How do we get our visitors to help in our prevention efforts? Who can help us? We have a number of partners already in place: Wildlife Forever, Ely Community Research, Ely Chamber of Commerce, Vermilion Community College, City of Ely

- Train as a Burntside Lake Sentry. Anyone from middle school and up can learn how to identify native plants and aquatic dwellers. Learn what to do if you see something that shouldn't be there. Help us find invasives before they spread throughout our lake.

- Act as a Resort Ambassador - be a liaison be-



One of Burntside's many lovely rock outcroppings. Photo Judy Krish

tween the Task Force and Burntside resorts. Help them help their guests.

Please contact Carrie Ohly Cusack (cohlycusack@gmail.com) or Reynold Mack (reynold.mack@comcast.net)

Thank you!

Carrie Ohly-Cusack

Burntside Lake Association Board Member/AIS Task Force Manager

Reynold Mack

Burntside Lake Association Board Member/AIS Detector

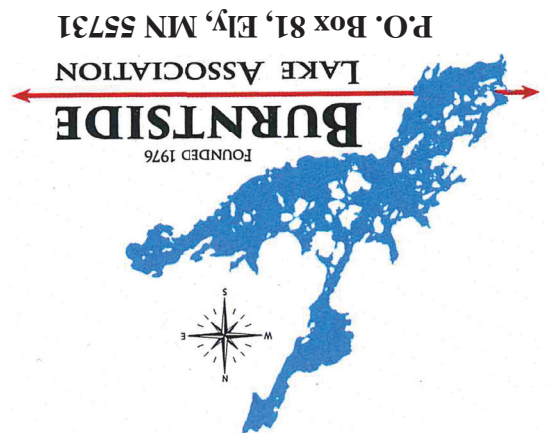
HiLo Plan Update

The HiLo Plan was adopted in March of 2019; much of the work is being done around Burntside's immediate watershed. Last year, the prescribed burn in the vicinity of School Section Bay was completed without incident. This summer, crews are hand cutting and clearing from Crab Creek to the Crab Lake Portage in preparation for prescribed burns scheduled to take place in 2021.

While individual members of the Burntside Lake Association often debate among ourselves the wisdom and execution of forestry practices (including prescribed burns) in the area, the Burntside Lake Association takes no position on them. We do however try to keep the lines of communication between the Ranger District and your Lake Association as open as possible, so that friends and neighbors can be notified when actions affecting us are scheduled to take place.

For more information, please visit the USFS website on the project <https://tinyurl.com/y7bbqexb>





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