

TLA Quarterly

APRIL 2007

President's Letter

The fishing shacks have disappeared and the ice on the lakes is starting to break up. Signals that another wonderful season on the water is almost here. The five Sandhill cranes that flew over on their way to Grass River raise hopes even higher.

Please remember that the mission of TLA is to preserve the water quality in our lakes and streams and to advise our communities how to accomplish this. Virtually all of our efforts in developing the predictive water quality model have aimed directly at this target. We have received support from all of the other area lake, river, and watershed organizations to accomplish this. Please consider supporting these worthy organizations as well:

Torch Lake Protective Alliance (TLPA) - The mission of this organization is "to preserve the beauty of Torch Lake and its watershed and protect its environment for the enjoyment of all. We accomplish this mission through education, advocacy, supporting legislation, and as a last resort through litigation." TLPA has tackled many tough property rights questions: the Torch Lake sandbar, irresponsible and illegal boat mooring, excessive boat noise, and riparian rights. TLPA has contributed money to assist TLA in developing the predictive water quality models. The outgoing TLA Vice-President, Ray Ludwa, is the TLPA Executive Director.

Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) - GRNA focuses on the preservation of an undeveloped natural area bordering Grass River and on environmental education. They have an active summer seminar and education program for children and adults. They cooperate with TLA and TLPA to sponsor joint environmental educational events like "In the Drink" and "Up the Creek".

Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center (TWC) - TWC based in Traverse City focuses on the impact of all waterways that drain into Grand Traverse Bay including the Elk River Chain-of-Lakes. They foster coordination and collaboration between various lake organizations and governmental officials. TWC has a state recognized strategic and management plan for the entire Grand Traversers Bay watershed. This strategic plan was essential for TLA's application for the M-DEQ grants it has received for the last two years and TWC provided the use of their tugboat for water sampling on Torch during the 2005 winter season.

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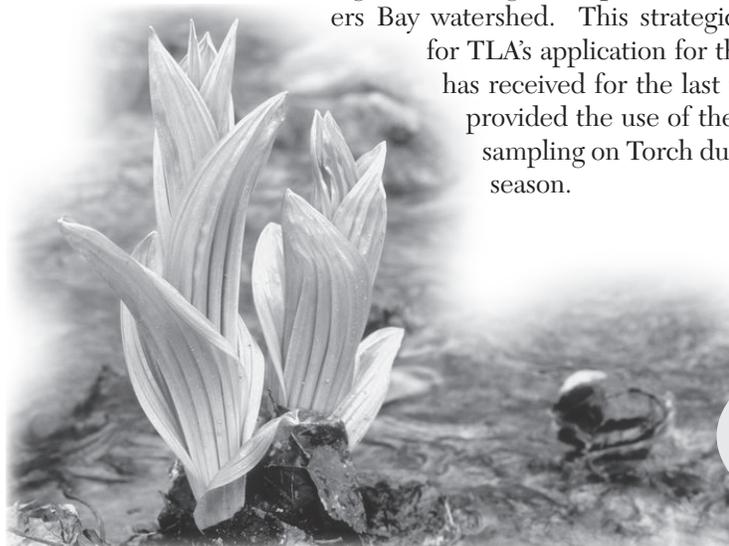
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*The Mission of the Three Lakes Association
is to provide leadership to preserve, protect,
and improve the environmental quality of
the chain of lakes watershed
for all generations.*



THREE LAKES ASSOCIATION

Founded 1966

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The TLA Quarterly is published by
the Three Lakes Association

Please direct comments or questions to Norton Bretz
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P.O. Box 689
Bellaire, MI 49615

Call for Volunteers

TLA needs volunteers for a number of ongoing projects in the coming year. We list some of these below and ask that anyone who is interested please send an email [info@3lakes.com] or leave a message on our phone [231-533-4852].

Boat Washing - TLA has a boat washing station that has been used for the past few years to help visitors clean their boats at various lake access points. TLA wants to raise awareness about invasive species that arrive as hitchhikers on boat hulls. We need volunteers to operate this station on popular sites and times

Intern Program - TLA will be continuing its program to involve area high school students in lake projects. In the past few years they have worked on a cladophora survey and our water quality grant studies. In 2007, we will make a survey of "glacial relicts"(from the last ice age) in Torch Lake and Lake Bellaire. These "relicts" are small macro invertebrates (shrimp and scuds) that live in the sediment and lie at the bottom of the food chain for our fish and exist only in the deepest and cleanest of our inland lakes. (Some of these "relicts" are experiencing a sharp decline in the Great Lakes.) TLA will work with the Inland Seas program to compare our data with theirs.

Shoreline Buffer Cruise - TLA and TLPA will be working with the Grand Traverse Watershed Center to promote shoreline buffer strips along our lakes. The Watershed Tug will be visiting Torch Lake this summer and cruising the perimeter to give information to riparians. We need hosts and moorings for the tug.

Township Visits - (See also "TLA Presents...Township Boards")

TLA would appreciate local support for the water quality model work in the form of your attendance at these meetings. The schedule will be posted on our website: www.3lakes.com

Water Quality Committee - Jack Norris and Bob Oswald have been working diligently for many years tracking down bad septic systems (the biggest contributors to manmade phosphorus in our lakes) using information from riparians and from the TLA Cladophora Survey done in 2004. As always, there are more places to look than people investigate. We could use more help in this area.



President's Letter *continued*

Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council (TOTM) - TOTM is based in Petoskey and focuses on water quality and environmental issues over a broad region of northern lower Michigan including the Elk River Chain-of-Lakes. This group can tackle some of the larger questions like invasive species, state environmental legislation, multi-lake and watershed studies, and stream management. Their staff is considered experts on water quality issues. The new TLA Executive Director, Norton Bretz is a member of their board.

On January 24th at Camp Hayo-Went-Ha we presented the results of the Bellaire-Clam Water Quality Model project to a diverse audience that included county and township representatives, other Lake Organizations, and M-DEQ officials. On March 20th we started making our presentations to the eight townships about using these modeling tools.

This summer's educational receptions are scheduled for June 27th at Craven Park in Bellaire and August 22 at the Summit Village Beach Club. These events, sponsored jointly by TLA, Grass River Natural Area and Torch Lake Protection Alliance, offer timely information and an opportunity to socialize over a glass of wine and tasty hors d'oeuvres. We look forward to seeing you there. A focus on Cedar River is appropriate

this year because TLA has just finished the Predictive Water Quality Model project on Lake Bellaire and their watersheds. The biggest contributor to Lake Bellaire is Cedar River - even more than Intermediate River from Intermediate Lake. Furthermore, the Mancelona TCE plume is encroaching on this watershed. We have invited ACUTE, Friends of Cedar River, Shanty Creek, and Summit Village home owners to participate. We look forward to seeing you there.

Get your foursomes together for the 3rd annual TLA-Grass River Charity Golf Tournament, June 10th, at Hawk's Eye. (See enclosed registration form.)

Tim Hannert, our Executive Director for the last four years, retired at the end of March. Tim has done an excellent job leading TLA through a very successful period. We wish both Tim and Sally the very best. We welcome Norton Bretz (our former treasurer) as our new Executive Director, and Becky Norris, our new treasurer. (See also "Leadership Changes".)

If you've not sent in your dues/donation for 2007, please do so. Touch base with your neighbors and friends; if they aren't members, please encourage them to join. We'll need new volunteers for our work this year, so please let us know what you'd like to do.

See you on the lakes!

Regards, *Bob Bagley*



Doyle Brunsen of the MDEQ explains to Tim Hannert and Ray Ludwa how to operate the automatic level and sampling gauge on Cedar River.

Leadership Changes

Tim Hannert, TLA Executive Director since October 2002, has stepped down as of April 1 and retired to his sheep farm on Stover Road. During his tenure Tim, along with Dean Branson, wrote the M-DEQ grants to develop a computer model of the nutrient balance in Torch Lake in 2004/5 and in Lake Bellaire and Clam Lake in 2006/7. These resulted in a total expenditure of over \$265,000 by the M-DEQ, Townships, and TLA. Tim applied for the \$25,000 DTE Energy Foundation grant that was awarded to TLA in 2006 for excellence in collaboration with other organizations and is supporting continued water quality work. He also got a Great Lakes Aquatic Network and Fund grant to build a boat washing station in 2003. This station has been used since then to educate boaters about invasive species that hitchhike on boats and trailers. Tim began our high school intern program in 2003 with an E Coli study of our public beaches. He has revitalized TLA and has been a solid force in guiding TLA to accomplish specific goals in water quality and improve the science behind our activities.

Norton Bretz, TLA's treasurer since 2002, is the new Execu-

tive Director. Norton has been involved in the high school intern program and the two M-DEQ water quality grant projects. He has a PhD in physics and was senior research physicist at Princeton University for 29 years. He admits to knowing a lot about things that have very little to do with water quality, but he has brought his background in instrumentation and data analysis to support TLA's water quality test equipment and organize the lake data. He also designed the protocol for measuring groundwater for the predictive model project, and worked on membership, education, and presentation activities.

Becky Norris has agreed to fill the treasurer vacancy. A former physician, an internist who spent her career in Kalamazoo, Becky is the daughter of Jack Norris, former Zone Director, Water Quality Chairman, and Vice President. Becky brings a long personal and family history to TLA.

In addition to continuing as secretary, Dorothy Clore has agreed to be will be the new publicity chair and general editor for all published TLA materials.



Norton Bretz, Tim Hannert, and Bob Bagley. Bob giving Tim a retirement photo.

TLA Continues Collaborations With Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center

One of the reasons TLA was awarded grants the last two years for our water quality predictive modeling work was collaboration with other organizations. The state granting agencies look favorably on this because it leverages the skills of multiple groups and minimizes duplication of efforts. All townships supported this. What you may not realize is that the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed Center (TWC) was also a necessary collaborator! Why? The Chain of Lakes, of which our Three Lakes are part, falls into the larger Grand Traverse Bay Watershed. Several years ago the State contracted with TWC to create an overall 'Management Plan' for the entire watershed. Because the predictive modeling work fell under the requirements of this 'Plan' it was a prerequisite to have the support of TWC for approval of our grant. This healthy and necessary collaboration continues!

This summer an M-DEQ grant to TWC will provide resources for conducting shoreline stewardship analysis within the TLA areas. Most of this work will be led by TWC, with support of TLA and TLPA volunteers, and involve creating a baseline 'map' of the riparian shoreline. This will include photographic as well as descriptive information on each property around the shore. This is a continuation of work done last year on Elk Lake. The work will be done in June and we hope will increase interest by shoreline residents in preserving their water/land boundary in a natural and sustainable way. You'll see the TLA flag while we're chugging along on the Watershed Tugboat or cruising on a pontoon boat. We look forward to stopping and chatting with you and your neighbors. Please let us know how you'd like to be involved with this project. In September, TWC and TLA will co-sponsor a workshop, so property owners can learn how to improve the shoreline and protect water quality. Stay tuned for details. (Peg Comfort, GTBWC)

Membership

We welcome new members Arthur and Carol Hoadley of Bellaire, which brings our paid membership to a total of 325. A Zone Director's meeting will be held at Dorothy Clore's from 9 - 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, May 10th. Call 331-6587 if you need directions to her house. A continental breakfast will be served. Membership chair Alan Hickman will be conducting the meeting.



Michigan Lakes and Streams Conference Talks

TLA will be presenting two talks at the April 20-22 Michigan Lakes and Streams Conference in Boyne Mountain Resorts in Boyne Falls. Norton Bretz will describe the Lake Bellaire and Clam Lake water quality model and Penelope Moskus of Limno-Tech, Inc. in Ann Arbor will describe the land-use model that was developed for the entire three lakes watershed. Representatives from lake organizations all over the state and many university experts attend and give presentations there..This is the second year that TLA has given papers at this conference.



TLA Presents Water Quality Results to Township Boards

On March 20,2007, TLA began making presentations that summarize three years of water quality model results to each of the following townships: Milton, Forest Home, Clearwater, Custer, Torch Lake, Helena, Kearney, and Central Lake. Our township partners supported TLA's grant applications to the Michigan Dept. Of Environmental Quality (M-DEQ) for our predictive water quality project by providing letters of support, trustees in attendance at public forums summarizing the project's conclusions, and pledges of funds to be paid if TLA was awarded the grant. The eight townships pledged a total of \$14,000 to symbolize their support of this work.

As part of the transition of this scientific work into new public policies that upgrade water quality protection measures in this watershed, TLA is hand-delivering copies of the reports from this work to each Township Board and asking each to continue their commitment to water quality protection initiatives in collaboration with TLA specialists. (Dean Branson)

DeWitt's Marine Expansion

There have been two public M-DEQ hearings on the proposed dock expansion at DeWitt's Marina on Clam Lake. The first of these was Dec. 18, 2006, where DeWitt presented plans. Many people at the hearing were against the dock expansion based on concerns about traffic, boat congestion, and public right to use. TLA took a neutral stance on the dock based on DeWitt's overall marina plans that involve several other improvements that will improve water quality in Clam Lake and because the dock was judged to be primarily a boat traffic issue. The M-DEQ has consistently sided with marina owners in similar cases in the past based on their agenda to expand lake usage.

Because of a snafu in notification, a second hearing was held Jan. 31, 2007. At this meeting DeWitt's presented a modified dock plan which reduced the number of slips to 40 reducing the worst congestion area on the northwest corner. Again representatives of Friends of Clam Lake argued that the docks encroached on public right-of-way. Finally, on March 4 and before the M-DEQ ruling on the dock permit, DeWitt again reduced the number of slips in their permit application to 32, eliminating the north set of docks entirely. Shortly after this, on Mar. 19 M-DEQ issued a permit giving DeWitt's permission to move ahead with their latest modification to the dock plans. DeWitt's plans to begin construction in June.

Obituaries

(It is with great sadness that we announce the following deaths of these dedicated Zone Directors)

Edwin Morey, M.D., 79, died Feb. 6, 2007 at his home in Fort Wayne, Ind. He was born in Springfield, Ohio. Ed was an Ob/Gyn for 30 years in Fort Wayne. Ed was an avid reader and enjoyed playing guitar and spending summers on Torch Lake. He is survived by his wife Barbara and two sons.. Memorials may be made to the Purdue Foundation.

Hilton Hunter, 78, died Feb. 11, 2007 in Chapel Hill, NC near his home in Pinehurst. He was born in Ann Arbor and earned a BA at MSU and an MS in meteorology at the Naval Post-Graduate School in Monterey, Cal. He worked at Dow Chemical and then IBM where he was an account executive. He spent the summers on Torch Lake for many years. Hilton is survived by his wife, Kathleen, and three children. Memorials may be sent to St. Joseph of the Pines (100 Waters Dr., Southern Pines, NC 28387) or the American Cancer Society.

New Membership Categories for 2007:

- **Basic (\$50)** supports newsletters and administrative costs.
- **Donor (\$100)** supports the above and ensures the continuation of basic water quality monitoring.
- **Steward (\$500)** supports the above plus the high school summer intern program.
- **Benefactor (\$1,000)** supports the above and predictive water quality modeling efforts.
- **Life (\$2,000)** accomplishes all of the above while assuring future financial stability by growing our endowment, the Three Lakes Watershed Conservation Fund, administered by the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation.

Please use the form below to renew your Three Lakes Membership.

membership counts!

BASIC DONOR STEWARD BENEFACTOR LIFE

Michigan Riparian Magazine Subscription
(Please include an additional \$10)

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May we include your name in our newsletter donor list?
 Yes No

Three Lakes Association is a 501(c)(3) corporation. Your dues and other contributions are tax deductible. Gifts, memorials, and bequests can also be made to the Three Lakes watershed Conservation Foundation administered by the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. Michigan residents receive a 50% state tax credit for contributions to this fund. Call for further information.

* * * * *

To join Three Lakes Association please return this form with your check to:
THREE LAKES ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 689
Bellaire, MI 49615

TCE Plume: Safe Drinking Water Assured

Antrim County United Through Ecology (ACUTE), is a coalition of 18 stakeholder organizations, including TLA, that operates under the auspices of the Community Resources Development (CRD).

In December 2006, a few anti-sewer individuals on the Mancelona Area Water and Sewer Authority (MAWSA) board voted to break their administrative services contract with the CRD headed by Gary Knapp. This action appeared aimed at removing Knapp from the sewer project and had the potential to derail ACUTE's 3-year community effort to provide drinking water to homes affected by the huge trichloroethylene (TCE) groundwater plume originating in Mancelona.

At their February meeting, MAWSA, at the urging of ACUTE and community leaders, passed a resolution to provide water to the new water mains and voted to extend their administrative contract with the CRD until both projects are completed. TLA participated in resolving this issue; other partners in the effort included State Rep. Kevin Elsenheimer and attorneys for the affected homeowners.

At a public forum on May 24, 2007 from 7-9 p.m. at Shanty Creek, M-DEQ will present their site-investigation findings and their recommended remedies for this TCE plume. Construction on the new water mains is expected to be completed by Sept., 2007. For more information, please contact Dean Branson at 544-2700.



TLA Calendar 2007

Tuesday, March 20 (-7:15 PM): Summary of TLA Water Quality Modeling Projects, Clearwater Twp. Hall.

Friday, April 20, : Michigan Lakes and Streams Association Annual Meeting, Boyne Mt. Lodge, Boyne Falls. Predictive Water Quality Model for Lake Bellaire and Clam Lake by Norton Bretz, Three Lakes Assoc. (10:45 AM), Land-Use Model for Lake Bellaire and Clam Lake Watersheds by P. Moskus, Limno-Tech, Inc. (11:30 AM).

Thursday, May 10 (9:00-11:30AM) Zone Directors' Meeting at Dorothy Clore's house, 10992 S.E. Torch Lake Drive, Alden.

Tuesday, May 15 (-7:00 PM): Summary of TLA Water Quality Modeling Projects, Torch Lake Twp. Hall.

Thursday, May 24 (7-9PM): Public Forum regarding M-DEQ's recommended remedies for TCE Plume, an ACUTE event...free. Shanty Creek.

Sunday, June 10 (1-8:00 PM) Golf Outing at Hawk's Eye Golf Course, shotgun start, dinner, prizes, and

fun...\$100./person

Wednesday, June 27 (4-6PM): "Up the Creek"... Join us at Craven Park, Bellaire, for a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception and panel discussion about managing land along our rivers, streams, and creeks. Experts from conservation organizations will share information about resources and services available to property owners.

Wednesday, July 11 (5:00 PM): TLA Annual Meeting, details and location to be announced.

Wednesday, August 22 (4-6PM): "In the Drink IV" - our fourth annual Chain of Lakes Water Report Card. Enjoy a wine and cheese reception and a pontoon cruise along the shores of Lake Bellaire. Meet at the Summit Village Beach Club on Lake Bellaire.

Lots of interesting and fun activities are planned for this year.

Do join us!

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**THREE LAKES
ASSOCIATION**

