

Lake Redstone

# Protection Connection

LAKE REDSTONE PROTECTION DISTRICT • FALL 2007

## Traffic on Land, Lake Concern Town of LaValle

by Cal Brey, Chair, Town of LaValle

As chairman of the Town of LaValle, my utmost concern is the safety of our residents, and that includes the people using Lake Redstone and the surrounding road system.

With snow just around the corner, I am again asking for your help in keeping our cul-de-sacs and dead end roads clear of parked vehicles. Vehicles parked in the right-of-way make it difficult for our snow plow crews to maneuver. As a last resort, we will be forced to contact the Sheriff's Department to have the vehicles ticketed and possibly towed, at the owner's expense.

Similarly, property owners should not place fences, lawn ornaments, structures, or plantings within the right-of-way, typically 33 feet from the road's centerline. The Town has been instructed by our attorneys to enforce the setback rule in order to keep the right-of-way clear and safe for the public. State statutes assign this responsibility to the municipality, and also empower the township to remove any obstacles in that area or request that the property owner do so.

We are currently working on identifying problem areas, developing a priority list, and drafting a notification letter for affected property owners. Please keep this in mind if you are planning on doing any planting or construction within 33 feet of the centerline. If you have any questions, please contact me at 393-9867 (cell) or 985-7695 (town hall) to discuss your plans.

### County 'Sweeps' Away Toxins

*Over 850 people took advantage of the October 5-6 "Clean Sweep" at the Sauk County Landfill to properly dispose of more than 2,500 gallons of used motor oil, 50,000 pounds of household hazardous wastes, and a small mountain of tires, electronics, appliances, paint, and pharmaceuticals.*

*"This is a critical activity to control these wastes before residents get frustrated and dump them in an unsafe manner or in a way that allows the chemicals to get into the water table and contaminate our lakes and rivers," emphasized LRPD Secretary Warren Frank.*

*Planning for the next "Clean Sweep" is currently underway. In the meantime, residents with questions on proper disposal of paints, pesticides, or other potential hazards should contact the Sauk County Land Conservation Department at 608-355-3245.*

There has also been some discussion regarding the increased boat traffic in the area north of the Section 11 boat landing just past the no-wake buoys. A number of residents are unhappy with the behavior of the boaters and the amount of congestion in this area. Along with anxiety about the safety of the people on the water and on shore, there is also a concern that this amount of activity is accelerating erosion.

It has been suggested that the Town take a look at making this area a "no-ski" or "no-wake" area again. During my 12 years as chairman of the Town's Lakes Committee, we have intensely discussed this issue on two different occasions. In both instances, the Town board felt it would be better to try and enforce the rules rather than putting in more buoys.

I will admit that we have not lived up to that promise, due to some recent issues with our police department. We are very close, however, to officially hiring a new full-time officer and are planning on hiring one or two more part-time officers for boat patrol. We intend to monitor this issue very closely next year and will be focusing our water patrol in that area. Our hope is that through education and enforcement, we can get a handle on this situation before we are forced to take the next step and declare this a "no-ski" area.

Thank you for your assistance in working through these issues and helping to promote safe enjoyment of the water. ♦

# Building on History

by Priscilla S. Bondhus, LRPD Chair

**A**S A RETIRED FAMILY and Consumer Science educator, I have devoted much of my life to family and profession. Spending time at Lake Redstone has offered a great opportunity to share with my own grandchildren the wonderful childhood experiences I had with my siblings, spending many hours on Lake Kegonsa under the watchful eye of our great-grandparents.

Shortly after purchasing property on Blackbird Court in 1999, I started attending the Lake Redstone Protection District's annual meetings. My interest in water quality also drew me to more and more of the monthly board meetings, until I was invited to fill an open board position. Two years ago, I was formally voted onto the board and last August, elected chair.

We are fortunate to have talented and committed individuals serving on the board. Each comes with different life experiences and brings varied talents. This diversity is positive and the different perspectives are good. It is apparent that the one binding quality for each board member is attention to Lake Redstone's water quality.

While our board discusses issues and concerns, the question of "What has been done in the past?" often comes up, and we are very fortunate to have Al Baade available with vital information and a historical perspective. A man-made lake brings many distinct difficulties, and as Al told his audience at the Annual Meeting in August, "Lake Redstone will never be a crystal-clear lake."

The photo below reminds us of just how far this area has come since it was carved out of farmland in 1964. Individual volunteers and previous boards faced the challenges of history and geography as they worked to enhance the lake. Bit by bit, those efforts have moved Redstone from freshly-cleared acreage to the beautiful lake that we now know.

Each of us bought property here because of what Redstone is today. Our mission now is to build on what has already been accomplished by others before us.

As a board, we are dedicated to continuing to work hard and find ways (some old, some new) to protect the lake and make it even better. We need your help, so please get involved. I personally invite you to bring your interests and concerns to the

LRPD monthly board meetings and to attend the Annual Meeting in August. Stop and introduce yourself when you see me on the dock or in the garden! You are also welcome to contact me or any of the other board members via phone or email.

I look forward to meeting you, talking with you, and hearing your ideas.

Cordially,



## Lake Redstone Protection District

*Protecting and rehabilitating the water quality of Lake Redstone for its residents and the public.*

### Board of Directors

**Priscilla S. Bondhus**, Chair

(608) 827-5554

(608) 985-8027, Lake

pbondhus@charter.net

**Dave Starin**, Vice-Chair

(847) 695-0204

(608) 985-7702, Lake

davestarin@wowway.com

**Warren D. Frank**, Secretary

(608) 985-7455

warrenfrank@msn.com

**Calvin J. Maurer**, Treasurer

(608) 985-7999

calshir@mwt.net

**Jim Mercier**, Commissioner

(608) 985-8218

mercijm@mwt.net

**Guy Neau**,

Town of LaValle Representative

(608) 985-8293

guy@mwt.net

**Linda Borleske**,

Sauk County Representative

(608) 524-2509

lborleske@co.sauk.wi.us

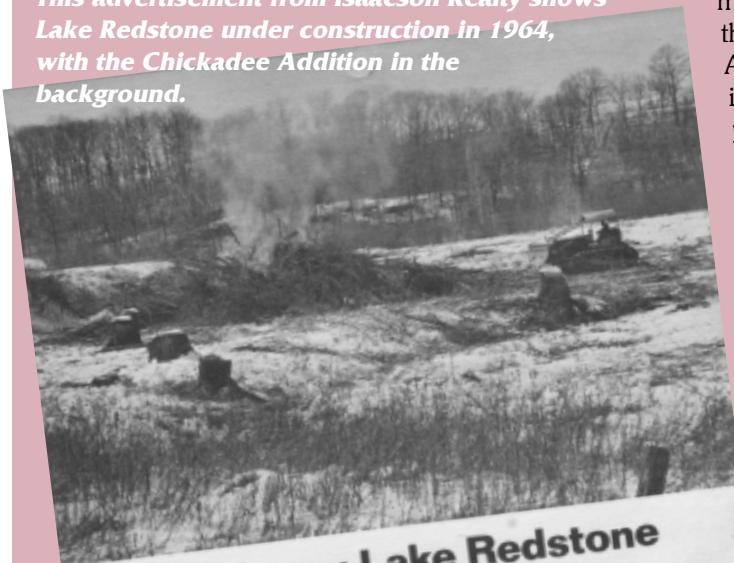
*Protection Connection* edited by

Rob Nelson

(608) 356-7662

unkierob@merr.com

*This advertisement from Isaacson Realty shows Lake Redstone under construction in 1964, with the Chickadee Addition in the background.*



**We know Lake Redstone from the bottom up.**

The above photograph, taken in 1964, shows the lake bed being cleared. The area where the bulldozer is working is now under 15 feet of water. The wooded area in the background is part of the

# Baade Sets Bar High for Lake Stewardship

*“Just the facts, Ma’am.”*

Whether it’s analyzing water quality data, retrieving obscure files from his laptop, or measuring the water flow over the Big Creek dam with a yardstick, that no-nonsense attitude has earned Al Baade a reputation as one of the leading stewards of Lake Redstone.

“Al’s ability to set aside all B.S. and present the facts is a great asset to the District,” declared outgoing LRPD Board Chairman Dave Starin. “His continuing display of care about the lake is beyond anything I’ve encountered in my 14 years here.”

A wireless design engineer with Eagle Test Systems, Baade has generously shared his technical problem-solving background to steer several important planning and research projects to fruition during the 19 years that he and his wife, Pat, have lived on Lake Redstone’s southern narrows.

“Things that are no-brainers for me can be difficult for people with other talents,” Baade explained, adding that having a mix of people with diverse skills is “a great asset” for leadership.

Baade’s service has included 12 years on the LRPD Board, including two years as chairman. It was during this period that the District completed its Watershed Improvement Policy, earning a Lake Stewardship Award from the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership in 1997. Like efforts to create a “slow-no wake” policy during periods of high water, or a project to install rain gutters in area farmyards, Baade thinks the award reflects the cooperative attitude and team spirit that characterize the District.

“Being proactive and working together is a better way to solve problems than looking for someone else to blame,” he affirmed.

Despite retiring from the board in 2005, Baade continues to remain engaged in research and policy issues. Over the last two years, he has coordinated the collection of flow and water chemistry data in Lake Redstone and its watershed. The information will be used to model nutrient movement into and out of the lake—a key step in evaluating past projects and identifying future priorities.

Baade also sets a high standard as a model citizen at Lake Redstone, practicing the stewardship ethic that he preaches.

“You couldn’t find a better example on the lake,” said longtime neighbor Riney Nowack. “Al wouldn’t do anything wrong on that lake, that’s for sure.”

An avid boater and water-skier, Baade values the lake not only for its recreational opportunities, but also for the solace he finds sitting at the end of his dock on a quiet evening. But he cautions that both of those aspects of lake living may be vulnerable to Redstone’s increasing popularity. While continued development around the lake is inevitable, Baade emphasized that residents need to exercise courtesy and responsibility in order to maintain the lake’s quality and charm.

“There’s plenty of room out there,” he asserts, “if people can remember to respect the lake resource and their fellow user.”

Along with planning and research, Baade stresses that education is a critical ingredient to enhancing the Lake’s natural and human communities. He happily anticipates a day when the District “puts itself out of business” after successful education and outreach efforts have persuaded everyone at Redstone to behave as responsible caretakers of the lake.

“Good stewardship involves not only one’s direct actions but also in educating others,” he emphasized. “That not only preserves the health and beauty of the lake, but improves them both, now and in the future.” ♦

***When not collecting lake data or enjoying a quiet evening on his pier, you might find Al Baade surveying Lake Redstone from the seat of his Air Chair.***



# The Worst It's Ever Been?

A critical look at Lake Redstone's clarity challenges popular opinion

by Al Baade

**S**EVERAL TIMES this summer, I've heard people say, "**The lake has never looked this bad.**" Curious to see if this was true, I started out by looking at the history.

In 1981, a study of Lake Redstone by the University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Environmental Studies stated:

*"Since this man-made lake was filled in the mid 1960s, water quality problems have plagued residents. Shortly after Lake Redstone was filled, signs of water deterioration appeared. Fast growing, or blooming, algae clouded the water in the warm summer months. Dense growths of aquatic weeds stood along the shores. Small bays became shallower. Fish kills occurred during several summers."*

Of course, Lake Redstone alone has not suffered through these problems. Southern Wisconsin has very few natural lakes. Almost all are created with man-made dams and filled with runoff from their fertile watersheds. Lakes Kegonsa, Arrowhead, Sherwood, Camelot, Petenwell, Castle Rock, Mirror Lake, Lee Lake, and White Mound, to name a few, share these attributes. And like Lake Redstone, none will ever be crystal-clear all summer.

For several years, the District treated the lake with copper sulfate to control green algae. Typically, the lake was treated on Wednesday or Thursday so it would look good for the weekends. The water clarity would improve for a few days and then the algae would return. Meanwhile, the toxic copper settled in the lake bed. Because it was only a temporary fix, and it left poison on the lake bottom, copper sulfate treatments were discontinued after the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources stopped issuing permits in 1997.

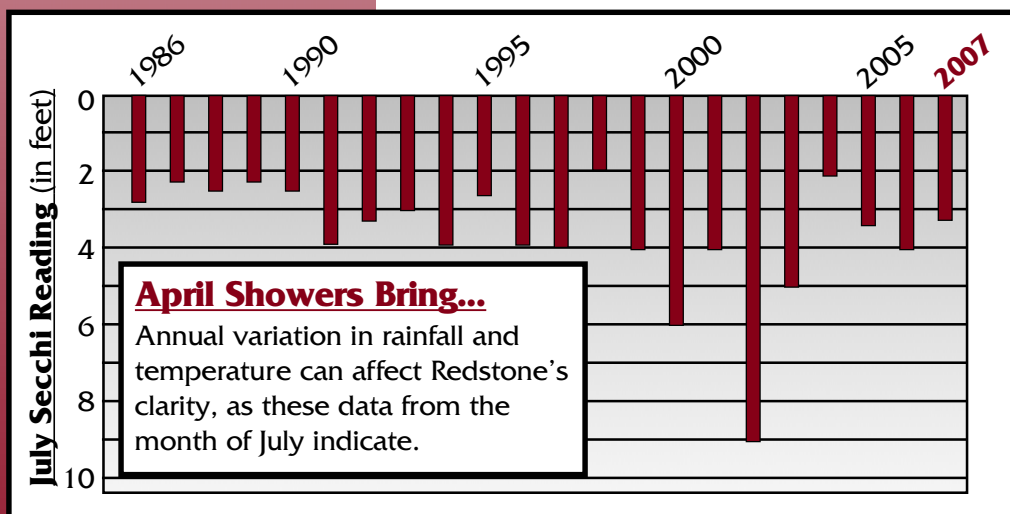
So, this summer, is the lake "**the worst it has ever been**"? Thus far, this statement has been based only on subjective opinions. I wanted objective, numerical data that isn't influenced at all by opinions. This would give me a fact-based conclusion about how the lake looks this year compared to historical records.

**FOR MANY YEARS**, the District has been collecting various types of lake data. One kind are secchi disk readings (pronounced *seck-kee*), which make it easy to compare water clarity between different years. The readings are collected using a weighted eight-inch round disk with alternating black and white quarters. The disk is dropped into the water and when it is no longer visible, the depth is noted, providing objective, numerical data. Secchi readings are very similar to the crude observation of whether you can see your hands or feet underwater when swimming.

The DNR has been collecting secchi data at the south end of Lake Redstone since 1985, while District volunteers have taken data since 1997 at three additional sites. In a typical year, the lake starts out very clear in spring when the water is cold and plant and algae growth is slow. As the lake warms up in summer, the increased temperature, sunshine, and nutrients promote plant growth, just like in your garden. As expected, the secchi readings decrease as

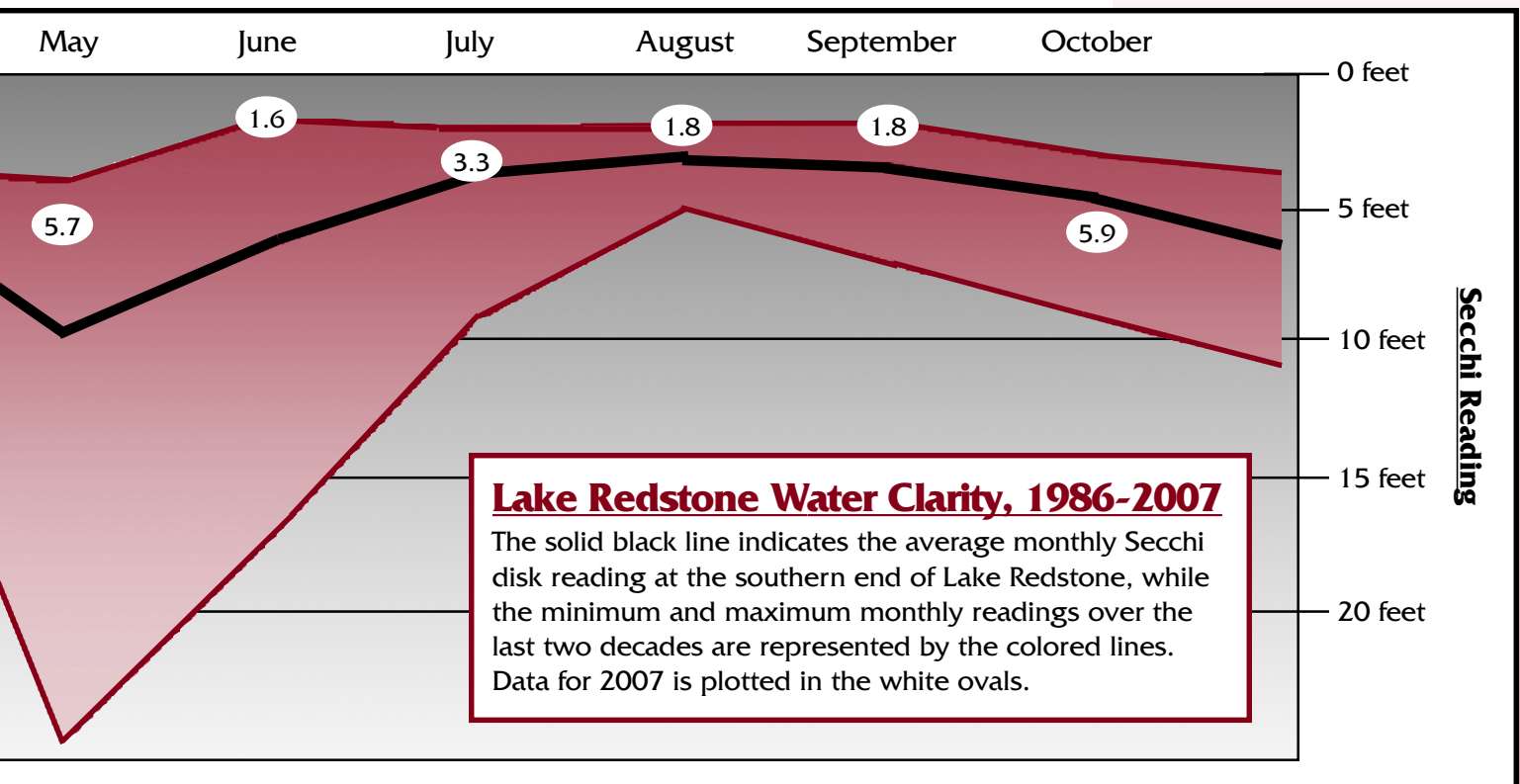
summer passes by. The deepest secchi reading of 24.5 feet was recorded in May, 2000, while readings of two feet are common in July and August of some years.

As the water begins to cool in fall, algae growth subsides and clarity begins to improve. Occasionally, there is a late fall algae bloom when the lake turns over,



## April Showers Bring...

Annual variation in rainfall and temperature can affect Redstone's clarity, as these data from the month of July indicate.



bringing up to the surface the phosphorus that had been trapped at the bottom of the lake and freeing it for new algae growth.

Reviewing the data over the last two decades, one finds that 1994, 1996, 2001, and 2004 all had poorer clarity than 2007. These observations also highlight just how heavily Lake Redstone's water clarity depends on the weather, as 2001 was one of the hottest summers ever and 2004 featured heavy spring rains which washed a lot of nutrients into the lake.

Another trend noted in the data is that clarity has *improved* since 1997, when copper sulfate treatments stopped.

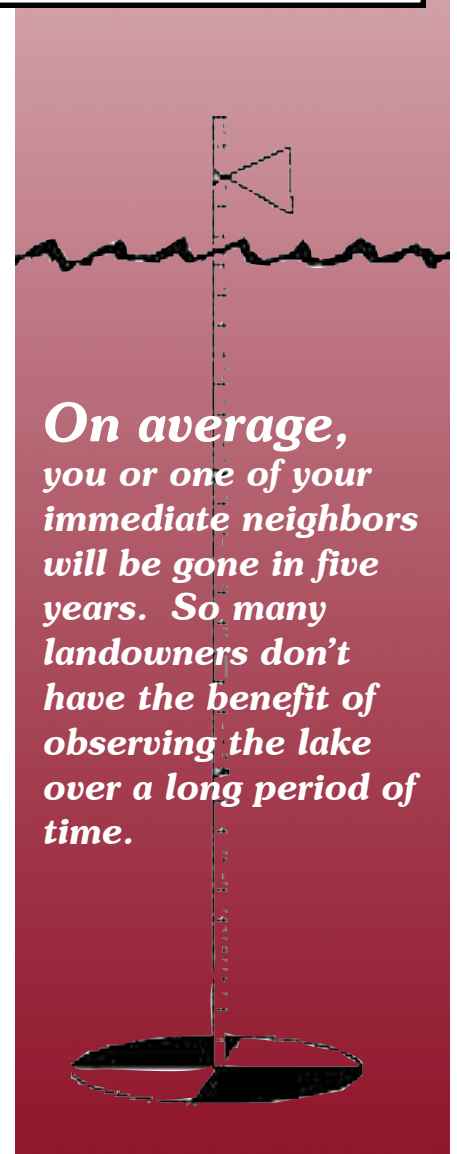
So the statement, "**The lake has never looked this bad**" is false. The lake *has* looked worse. I think what the speaker meant was that "**I've never seen the lake look this bad.**"

Last year, the District did a survey of all landowners. One of the interesting points was that one-third of the landowners have lived here five years or less. That means, on average, you or one of your immediate neighbors will likely be gone in five years. So many landowners don't have the benefit of observing the lake over a long period of time.

**BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE**, 2007 was not a great year for water clarity. As mentioned, water clarity, and plant growth in general, is heavily weather dependent. Sunshine, nutrients, and warmth promote algae and plant growth. A long winter with a late ice-out will result in a cooler lake and a slower start in plant growth. But a winter with little snow allows sunshine through the ice and gives plant growth a head start in spring.

2007 was an unusual weather year, coupling low rainfall with warmer temperatures. May was a whopping five degrees above average, while June and July also had above-average temperatures. From May through July, our area received approximately one-half its average rainfall. Not only was Lake Redstone very low through July, the Baraboo River tied a record low set in 1950! Then August was the wettest month ever.

So are we slaves to the weather when it comes to water clarity? Not completely. While sunshine and warmth are out of our control, reducing nutrients will slow down plant growth. That's why the District focuses its efforts on reducing the nutrients coming into the lake. And that's where you and your neighbors can play an active role! In years to come, I hope to hear more residents saying "**Here's how I'm helping Lake Redstone!**"



# Annual Meeting Shuffles Board, Reviews Projects

by Warren Frank, LRPD Secretary

Cal Maurer and Jim Mercier were re-elected to new three-year terms on the LRPD Board and Priscilla Bondhus succeeded Dave Starin as Board chair during the District's Annual Meeting on August 4 at the LaValle fire station.

New to the board is Guy Neau, replacing Ed Bodendein as a representative from the Town of LaValle. Warren Frank continues to serve as secretary, Maurer as treasurer, and Starin assumes the responsibilities of vice-chair. Linda Borleske rounds out the seven-member body, representing the Sauk County Board of Supervisors.



PHOTO BY NICK LADAS

One of the day's highlights was Al Baade's keynote discussion on the influence of weather on apparent water quality in a program titled **How's the Lake Doing? A Study of Facts**. His research concluded that while precipitation and temperature conspired to diminish Lake Redstone's clarity in 2007, the lake was not "the worst it's ever been." (A revised version of this presentation appears on page 4.)

The meeting also reviewed the District's key activities in the past year, including:

- Continued study of Lake Redstone and the water reaching it from its 11,000-acre watershed. Funded in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, data collection is nearly complete and a development of a detailed computer model will soon begin, helping to guide the District's future actions.
- Construction of a berm, retention pond, and rock chute along Timmons Road to slow the flow of rain run-off during heavy storms and reduce the amount of farmland sediment entering Eagle Bay on the east side of Lake Redstone. This was a cooperative project by the LRPD, the Town of LaValle, Sauk County, and the farm owner. All four groups contributed to the effort.
- Revision and approval of an Aquatic Plant Management Plan, outlining the District's desires and intentions regarding control of "weeds" growing in Lake Redstone, originally written in 2003.
- Implementation of new education and outreach efforts, including a biannual newsletter mailed to all LRPD landowners. A District-wide survey in 2005 identified improved communication as a high priority, and the Board continues to encourage input from residents and explore new ways to make this possible.

The District is also expanding our involvement with other area groups, including the Wisconsin Association of Lakes (WAL) and the 12-member Sauk County Association of Lakes and Rivers. In addition, we are represented on the Citizen's Advisory Committee to the Sauk County Land Conservation Department and the team developing the Sauk County Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The meeting also offered an opportunity for the District to recognize some of the volunteers that provide the hands-on manpower to get things done. Warm thanks and appreciation gifts were awarded to Gary Botsford, Nick Ladas, and Bob Roloff for their continued work collecting water samples around the lake and its tributaries, and to Al Baade for his coordination of this effort.

Bill Courtney reviewed the audit conducted by his team and concluded that the financial documents of the District are in "very fine shape."

After discussion, the electors approved a 2008 budget of \$81,200. Although this represents a slight increase from last year, some reserve funds will be used, resulting in a net tax levy that is actually lower than in 2007. ♦

**The LRPD Board of Directors, from left, Linda Borleske, Guy Neau, Jim Mercier, Dave Starin, Warren Frank, Priscilla Bondhus, and Cal Maurer, consider a resolution during their November business meeting at the Town of LaValle hall.**

# Weather, Disease Offer Anglers a Mixed Bag

by Tom Wagner

This past season was one of extremes in both temperature and precipitation, offering area fishermen a wide range of conditions for pursuing that trophy “wall fish” or an occasional fresh-caught meal.

The spring warmth came about right on time, along with episodes of early, heavy rain. Then, early to mid summer brought above-average temperatures with drought-like conditions. As we entered late summer, the temperatures stayed above normal, but we encountered near-flood circumstances as the area got hit with over 15 inches of rain within just a few August days.

Unlike the unpredictable weather, fish shocking surveys at Lake Redstone have been conducted on a fairly regular basis—until now. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff performed comprehensive surveys in 1993, 1998, and 2004. From 1998 through 2004, annual (and sometimes semi-annual) surveys were done to evaluate the walleye and musky stocking programs.

I am very disappointed to report, however, that the state has limited the survey shocking program for most lakes to once every eight years. Our last survey was in 2004, so our next scheduled survey will not occur before 2012 unless the DNR alters their plans.

Tim Larson, DNR fisheries biologist for our area, has been involved with the shocking program for the past 14 years. Evaluation of the lake shocking statistics, along with information supplied by local bass club tournaments and the Trap Attack ice tournaments, has led him to the following conclusions:

☞ In regards to crappies, Lake Redstone appears to be in good shape. Both black and white crappie continue to reproduce well, with normal growth and population numbers.

☞ The bass evaluation presents mixed reviews. Statistics seem to indicate that the largemouth bass population may be dwindling. The bright spot here is that the smallmouth bass that were stocked by the LaValle Haug Hunters in 1998 and 1999 seem to not only be surviving and growing at a good rate, but also are naturally reproducing. Recent data indicates that there probably is an equal population of smallmouth bass as compared to largemouth bass. This is fantastic news!

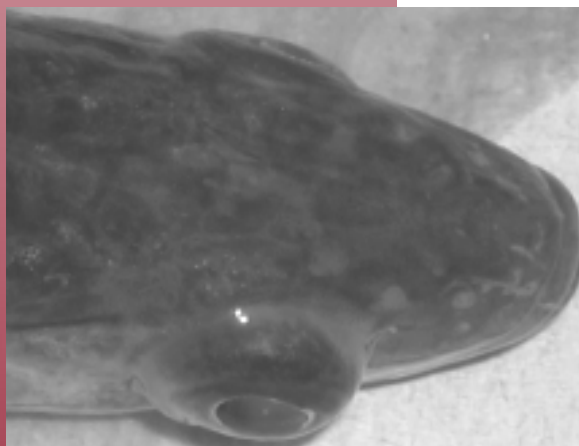
☞ The DNR has stocked walleye and musky for a number of years. The survival of these stocked fish compares favorably with natural reproduction survival in Lake Wisconsin. Neither walleye nor musky have been found to naturally reproduce in Lake Redstone.

Perhaps the biggest item of bad news is that Lake Redstone did not receive any walleye or musky in 2007. This was due to the discovery of VHS in the state's waters. VHS—short for viral hemorrhagic septicemia—is a very serious disease that triggers internal and/or external bleeding in most species of fish and has been responsible for fish kills in the Great Lakes. In Wisconsin, VHS has only been found in Lake Michigan and the Lake Winnebago chain, but the DNR is trying to prevent the spread to other bodies of water.

In addition to promoting meticulous boat cleaning procedures, the DNR this spring restricted the transfer of any fish between bodies of water. One consequence was the cancellation of the annual harvest of approximately 1,500 crappie from Lake Redstone for kids' fishing ponds in Reedsburg and Baraboo.

Furthermore, the eggs that produce the walleye for stocking Lake Redstone are obtained from Lake Puckaway (a VHS zone because it is connected to Lake Winnebago

*continued on page 8*



**Bulging eyes and internal bleeding are among the symptoms of VHS in fish. For updates, disinfection protocols, and more information, visit**

**[www.dnr.wi.gov/fish/pages/vhs.html](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/fish/pages/vhs.html) or contact the DNR Poynette Service Center at 608-635-8122.**

PHOTO © DR JIM WINTON (USGS, SEATTLE, WA), DR MOHAMED FAISAL (MSU, LANSING MI) AND DR PAUL BOWSER (CORNELL, ITHACA NY)

# Lake Redstone

PROTECTION DISTRICT

P.O. Box 313

LAVALLE, WI 53941

Want to learn more about life on Wisconsin's lakes?  
Let your mouse do the walking to these on-line resources!

Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources: [www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/lakes/](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/org/water/fhp/lakes/)  
UW-Extension Lakes Program: [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/uwexlakes/)  
Wisconsin Association of Lakes: [www.wisconsinlakes.org/](http://www.wisconsinlakes.org/)

WI DNR PHOTO



**Removing vegetation, debris, and water before leaving the boat landing is an important step in stopping VHS.**

## **VHS...continued from page 7**

via the Fox River). These eggs are reared at the southern hatchery in the Rock Lake area. Our musky eggs come from non-VHS waters but are reared in the same hatchery as the walleye eggs from Puckaway. Since the hatchery was quarantined, we were unable to receive any musky, either.

The DNR plans to obtain walleye eggs from another source and will attempt to raise fish from those eggs. If they are successful, there is a possibility that stocking of both walleye and musky could resume next year. But at this time, there is no guarantee.

All things considered, Tim Larson feels "the fishery of Redstone has been stable over the 14 years I've worked with it and I see no evidence that indicates a recent decline."

It won't be long before the temperatures plummet and we are back to the hard water fishing. Tight lines and good luck to all for a safe and healthy winter. ♡

## **Take a Stake in Your Lake!**

Here are a few simple ways you can help enhance Lake Redstone and protect your property investment:

- **Choose zero phosphorus fertilizer or use no fertilizer at all;**
- **Keep garden refuse, grass clippings, leaves, pet waste, and campfire ashes out of the water;**
- **Ensure proper maintenance of your septic system;**
- **Protect your property from soil erosion by maintaining shoreline buffers;**
- **Establish a rain garden;**
- **Use low- or no-phosphate detergents;**
- **Keep hard surface on your property to a minimum;**
- **Properly dispose of household hazardous wastes and medicines; and**
- **Don't feed the geese.**