

# The Dock Post



*Our goal is to preserve and protect our lake for generations to come.*

## Lake Ada Annual Picnic: August 10!



It's time for our annual Lake Ada Picnic! Join us this Saturday, August 10th at 4 pm. This year, the picnic will be hosted by Mike Nelson at 394 Sunrise Drive NW.

There will be a social hour from 4-5 pm with food being served around 5 pm. The picnic will be catered by Butts and Buns for the main course and we encourage everyone to bring a dish to share!

You will have the opportunity to buy Lake Ada merchandise, and we will be selling raffle tickets for door prizes. Sarah VanBeck will speaking to the group about the great progress being made on our Lake Friendly Shoreline Program.

Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

*Go to [www.lakeada.org](http://www.lakeada.org) to join the Lake Association. Annual membership is just \$10! You'll get email updates about upcoming events, access to the directory, and so much more!*

Volume 41 Number 2

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*Have you lost a family member, friend or neighbor? Let us know so we can share memories of them here, and please tell us what they loved about Lake Ada. Email [sarah.vanbeck@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.vanbeck@gmail.com).*

**Association Calendar**

Sept 14 - Board Meeting 8:30 am

Ponto Town Hall & Virtual

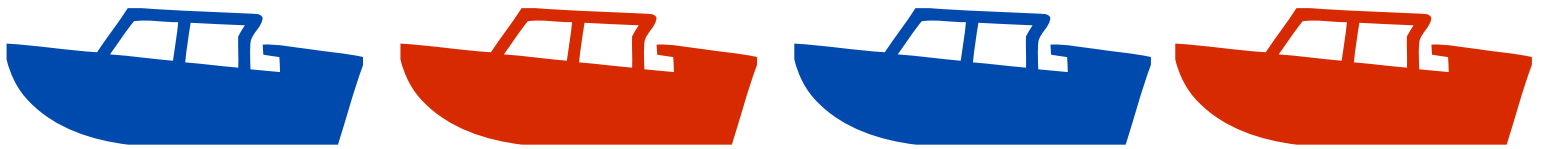
# Independence Day Parade at Lake Ada

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The 2024 Fourth of July Boat Parade was a huge success!

With dozens of boats participating, it was good old fashioned fun just like we remember from our childhoods at the lake.

Thank you to all who joined in the festivities and especially to those who head the call for lake-friendly water cannons instead of water balloons. Your Lake Association went on cleanup patrol and scooped up about 40 water balloons, mostly in the north bay. If you find water balloons pieces on your shoreline, please collect and dispose in the trash. Water balloons look like food to many creatures, and can be fatal if swallowed by fish, loons, turtles, or your dog.



## Dinnertime! Anyone Hungry for Some Mosquitoes?

Our fish, frogs, songbirds, bats, dragonflies, and many other beneficial insects and aquatic creatures are! They eat more mosquitos than we will ever be able to spray away, so keeping them healthy is our best defense against the “state bird.”

Avoid pesticides (which can be fatal to many birds and small aquatic life) and bug zappers (which kill everything but mosquitos). Consider installing a bat house. According to the DNR, Minnesota bats eat only insects, so they’re not dangerous to humans or pets, and can consume up to 1,500 mosquitos per night!



# Owls Have an Important Job



Northern Minnesota's forests are home to some incredible owls like the Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, and Northern Saw-whet Owl. Owls have specialized feathers that allow them to fly silently, large eyes with excellent night vision and depth perception, and asymmetric ear opening. These features make them excellent nighttime hunters, and they do an important job of controlling the population of rodents such as rats, mice, voles, and other small mammals, reptiles and even insects.

Why does this matter? Owls are top predators and we need them to keep pest populations in check, which prevents damage to farm crops, gardens and forests. So, the next time you hear an owl's call in the night, remember it's not just a beautiful sound—it's a sign that our owls are busy doing an important job.

## Got Mice?

Predators such as owls, eagle, hawks and snakes are key to controlling rodents in forests and farmlands, but prey contaminated with poisons can be fatal, and poisoning is a slow and horrible death. Barry, the beloved owl from Central Park Zoo who succeeded at finding his own food despite being raised in captivity, tragically died from rodenticide poisoning. As you prepare to close up for the season, here are some effective and safer alternatives to poison for managing rodents:

- Traps: Using snap traps can be a more humane way to control rodents already inside.
- Exclusion: Seal entry points around your cabin and garage, such as gaps in walls, floors, and around pipes to prevent rodents from getting inside.
- Sanitation: Keep areas clean and free of food scraps that attract rodents.
- Repellents: Putting mothballs inside the case of your outboard motor for storage is an effective repellent (we once found a motor packed with acorns!). In the garage, try non-toxic repellents, such as peppermint oil, ultrasonic devices or a proven Lake Ada method is shaving pieces of Irish Spring soap and leaving it on paper plates around entry points – mice do not like that fresh green scent!

# We've Had Twenty Site Visits on Lake Ada and More to Come

It's been a busy year for our Lake-friendly Shoreline Program. We put out a call for property owners interested in learning more about how to enhance their shoreline, and the response was overwhelming. On July 1, Ryan Carlson from Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District (Cass SWCD) spent a full day conducting assessments at seven Lake Ada properties. He provided each property owner with a customized report, including recommendations for specific trees and plants that prevent shoreline erosion and provide habitat for pollinators and wildlife.

Since the start of the program, 20 neighbors have taken this opportunity to learn how to make their shoreline lake friendly! In 2022 and 2023, we worked with Crow Wing SWCD, who also support the Pine River watershed, and those visits were funded by our Lake Ada Association. Even better, Cass County site visits are now available at no cost.

Unfortunately, matching funds for shoreline restoration projects in the Pine River watershed were depleted earlier this year by some large projects, but we are hopeful that match funding will be available again next year. Now is the time to get a site visit and start planning your project to apply for funding early next year.

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## Learn How to Make Your Shoreline Lake Friendly! Fall is a Great Time for a Site Visit



We weren't able to schedule everyone who was interested July 1, so we're providing a path to sign up for your site visit individually. Use the QR code or email [ryan.carlson@casscountymn.gov](mailto:ryan.carlson@casscountymn.gov)



# Another Successful Shoreline Restoration Project on Smith Drive!

On June 22, Laura Mendoza of Great Roots came to Lake Ada for a second shoreline restoration project on Smith Drive.

The Raymond and Solyst families came out in numbers to work on the installation of willow wattle and hundreds of native plants that Laura selected especially for their shoreline conditions. Just over a month later, they already have flowers blooming!



You can see some video of their project reposted by the Lake Ada Association Facebook page @ <https://bit.ly/smithshoreline>



Next door at the Cater-VanBeck cabin, the shoreline is really taking off this year from the project they did with Laura on Memorial Day weekend 2023.

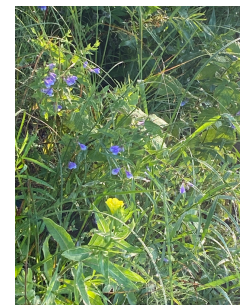
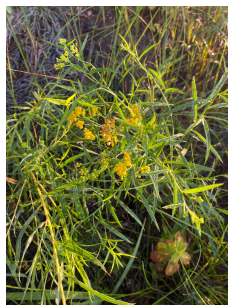


Before (2023)



After (2024)

Flowers are abundant and the willow has taken roots. While they are enjoying all the rain this year, these plants are especially resilient because they have very deep roots – some as much as 5 feet deep! This helps them hold the shoreline and keeps them healthy and green even in drier years, unlike the brittle, brown mown lawns we had the past couple years.



## I Already Have a Natural Shoreline. How Should I Care for It?

Restoring native plants to a shoreline takes time and resources. The fastest and easiest way to keep Lake Ada clear and clean for all to enjoy is to preserve the natural shorelines we already have. Here are some things you can do if you are lucky enough to have a natural shoreline.



- Avoid pulling or clearing vegetation from the shoreline. Limit the clearing to what you need to access the lake. For a beautiful lake view, consider trimming instead and adding native flowers and trees.
- Manage stormwater runoff by pointing downspouts away from the lake or build a rain garden to capture and absorb runoff, filtering out pollutants before they reach the lake.
- Use permeable surfaces for driveways, patios and pathways to reduce runoff and allow water to soak into the ground.
- Avoid lawn fertilizer and weed killers to minimize nutrient runoff into the lake, which causes algae blooms and slime in our waters.

# Fly Little Loon, Fly

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I've been coming to Lake Ada for 40 years now, and I'm sorry to say I've never seen our little loons learning to fly. But one night, around the campfire, my neighbors described the event. They talked about how excited the adult loons get as they cheer on their little ones to take flight. My neighbors laughed and laughed when they remembered how excited all of the loons became once a little loon actually flew. I think my neighbors described it as the loudest "loon party" they ever heard!

It's difficult for loons to fly. That's because loons are better adapted for diving and fishing underwater. Their feathers are very light, and their flight feathers are particularly buoyant. According to experts, if loons had large wings, they wouldn't be able to stay submerged to chase fish. They require short wings and heavy bodies to dive well.



According to the Journey North blogpost, "Common loons weigh about 9 pounds with a 46-inch wingspan. To put this in context, Great Blue Herons average 5.3 pounds with a 72-inch wingspan, and Sandhill Cranes weigh 10.6 pounds with a 77-inch wingspan. Those relatively small loon wings must support a lot of bird compared to the huge wings of the crane and heron!"

*"Imagine a huge parachute floating down with a 100-pound box. It can take a long time to hit the ground. Now imagine that same box attached to a tiny parachute. It won't 'float' at all but drop fast! Herons and cranes are like the box with the big parachute, and loons are like the same box with a tiny parachute. Thanks to their tiny wings, loons simply can't glide or soar, but must always flap to stay aloft."*

But how do the little loons learn to fly? According to [Journey North](#), *"The hardest challenge for loons is getting up in the air in the first place. In order to get lift, they need a lot of air rushing beneath their airfoil wings. Even running as fast as they can is usually not enough. They also need the boost of wind. So first they feel which way the wind is blowing, and then run straight into it while flapping powerfully. The stronger the wind, the shorter the 'runway' they need to takeoff. Sometimes when young loons are late developing (usually from a late nesting or when food is scarce), their flight feathers are barely ready for use when the first autumn ice is starting to form on their lake. Then without help, they are stranded."*

This is also why the orientation of a long, narrow lake is critical to a little loon learning to fly. If the lake runs parallel to the way the wind most normally blows, it is easier for the little loons to fly. If the lake runs at right angles to the normal wind direction, it may not give the little loons enough of a runway.

The [Journey North](#) blog continues, *“Once loons get up in the air, they are strong fliers and can cover hundreds of miles in straight flight. But migration is very energy intensive for them, because they have to flap every inch of the way.”*

Loon chicks, also called loonlets, begin practicing flight at 10-11 weeks old by building wing strength. Then, around 12 weeks old, the little loons run on the water, to the delight of their parents, until they take flight into the air. Once the little loons show they can fly, most of their mommies and daddies start heading south, leaving their offspring to follow in a few weeks.

Baby loons are usually born in late May or early June, so those of us interested in seeing their “flight celebration” should be on the lookout around early September.

Even though I haven’t seen these “flight lessons” with my own eye, maybe there are some of you who can share a story or two of the first time you saw this spectacular sight? If so, send your story to [sarah.vanbeck@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.vanbeck@gmail.com) and we’ll include some of these stories in a future DockPost article.

Written by Scott VanBeck

# Woodlands FOR Wildlife

SEPT  
7<sup>th</sup>

9:00 AM to Noon  
@ the Walker area Community Center  
105 Tower Ave  
Walker, MN 56484



**Free Donuts, Coffee & BBQ Lunch provided.**

Join wildlife and forest experts for a woodland workshop on how you can manage woodlands to promote healthy and abundant wildlife.

**Register: Scan the code  
or text: 218-833-2492**

(Text Name, # of people, diet restrictions)





# Passing of Lake Friends

## Jack Kuhns

*August 22, 1931 – April 29, 2024*

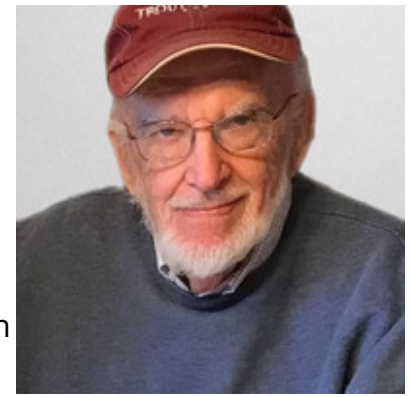
John “Jack” Theodore Kuhn of Cedar Rapids, Iowa passed away on April 29. Jack was born on August 22, 1931, to John and Nellie Webber Kuhn in Walker, Iowa.

He graduated from Immaculate Conception High School in Cedar Rapids, Iowa where he was captain of the basketball team and attended Loras College. On May 21, 1955, he married Connie Takes in Walker. Jack served in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict.

Following his military service, he worked as a lieutenant at the Cedar Rapids Police Department until his retirement in 1987.

Jack loved fishing at Lake Ada, where you would always find him on the porch swing, enjoying a Swisher Sweet, hunting, watching local and national sports, sharing jokes, and cherishing moments with his family, especially his grandchildren.

Jack is survived by his wife of 69 years, Connie; two sons, Mark Kuhn of Cedar Rapids, John Kuhn of Marion; daughter Mary Kuhn Hanlon of Prosser, WA; 10 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents.



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## Tom Powell

*July 27, 1940 - May 14, 2024*

Tom Powell of Shoreview, Minnesota passed away on May 14. Tom was born in Toronto, Canada. He received a degree in Forestry from the University of Minnesota, where he played hockey as a Bulldog and then a Gopher. He worked for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the University of Minnesota, where he founded Environmental Field Days and Pedal Power.

He transitioned to Farm Credit Banks as Director of Technical Training where he worked with banks throughout the Midwest, Canada, and Poland. He also founded his own business, Media Integrated Training Services, where he expanded his ideas to new banks and businesses.

He adored his children and grandchildren and enjoyed spending time with them. He also enjoyed coaching youth hockey, fishing trips to Canada, ocean fishing on Pine Island Sound, camping in the Voyageur's National Park and golfing, especially trips to Jekyll Island. He was a frustrated Vikings fan. He loved to figure out projects involving motors and boats. At age 60, he began remodeling their cabin in the north bay of Lake Ada, which took at least 15 years and kept him active and happy.

He and his wife Mary enjoyed traveling together in retirement. He enjoyed learning throughout their travels, especially WW II history and European culture.

Tom was preceded in death by his brother, John Powell. He is survived by his wife, Mary, his children, Richie Powell, Catherine Finnegan (Patrick), and James Powell (Catherine), his grandchildren, Mia and Gus Finnegan and step-grandchildren, Stella and Charlotte Bauer. He is also survived by his sister, Caley Powell, and sister-in-law, Mary Powell.

