



Big Wood Lake Association  
Fall 2023

# Wood Chips



Photo by Sue Segelstrom

## President's Corner

By Mike Strub

You know the old saying "Time flies when you're having Fun." Well boy-howdy we sure must have had some fun this summer! After months of really nice weekends (weekdays, too) and lifelong summer memories, just like that (snap) the fall colors were spectacular and the bird migration was awesome! I hope this finds you well and in warm company.

Whether you're brand new to the lake, a weekender, or year round resident, it's good to keep in touch through this newsletter. Kudos to Cris Peterson for putting it all together!

The Big Wood Lake Association is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 1988 for the purpose of conducting activities intended to protect, maintain and enhance the environmental and recreational values of Wood Lake and its surroundings. Your \$30 annual dues ensures that we can carry on this mission:

We are always open to new ideas and one neat idea came out at our fall membership meeting. It was proposed that we hold a dock decorating contest, to take place around the 4th of July. Anyone wanting to work on coordinating the logistics and communications on what could be a lot of fun, please reach out to me or any BWLA Board member. Here's the ABCs of our on-going projects, with some other volunteer opportunities listed.

**A**quatic Invasive Species and water quality monitoring. Matt Berg provides us with an annual report of AIS in the lake, and every three years a detailed report on all things Wood Lake. Copies of these reports are available and online. We have volunteers who take water samples to monitor water quality and clarity.

**B**uoys. The BWLA provides and maintains about 10 marker buoys and we can always use volunteers to retrieve and replace any wayward markers.

**C**ommunity. Social events including the flares and flotilla, picnic in the park, and Big Wood Lake clothing and merchandise sales. We hope that the above mentioned dock decorating contest happens next year. We're always looking for new and interesting stories to share about Wood Lake, so volunteer writers are also needed!

If you haven't paid your 2023 membership dues yet, please do so by 12/31/23!

See you at the lake!

Mike



## Photo Contest Honorable Mentions

Kelsey Anderson



Kelsey Anderson



Sherry Ryan





# Welcome to Our New Game Warden

by Cris Peterson

Matt Weseli grew up in Hudson WI, studied conservation and agricultural engineering at UW River Falls, and through a long and circuitous route has recently landed in Burnett County as our new game warden. Welcome Matt!

Fresh out of college, Matt worked for the Parks and Recreation departments at Kinnickinnic and Willow River State Parks. When his wife decided to attend graduate school in pharmaceuticals at UW Madison, Matt worked as a sheriff's deputy in Dane County for two years.



In 2020, he became a full-time warden in Sauk County located a bit north of Madison. Today, Matt and his wife, Kiah, and 14-month-old son, McKay, live in Webster. Kiah is a pharmacist at Yellow River Pharmacy in Webster while Matt has an office at the Grantsburg Ranger Station on Highway 70.

The family's hobbies include downhill skiing and ice fishing in the winter and camping, hiking and biking in the summer. Matt is an avid bow and gun hunter. He looks forward to meeting all of us wonderful Wood Lakers at one of our fall or spring membership meetings.

## A Hailstorm of Acorns

By Cris Peterson



Last year's mild winter has led to a bumper crop of acorns this fall. In August, our last month at the lake, acorns divebombed our cabin roof day and night.

The unusual abundance is the result of a "mast seeding event," a phenomenon that happens once every few years, in which oak trees produce far more acorns than normal, experts say.

In a typical year, a healthy oak tree can produce more than 2,000 acorns. In a mast year, that number can jump up to 10,000, and mast years tend to occur every 2 to 5 years.

The plentiful supply of acorns we're seeing now has a lot to do with the weather we experienced last fall and spring.

According to forest experts, we probably had favorable precipitation last fall. Then we didn't have a frost that affects the germination of the flowers that actually produce the acorn.

There are a lot of other factors that can go into it as well: the amount of sunlight an oak tree gets, the age of the tree, or how healthy it is.

We only have two oak trees on our 85-foot lot on Wood Lake. The acorn piles are ridiculous and the squirrels are in heaven, their little cheeks bulging with oak treats.



### Board of Directors

Mike Strub, *President*

Bruce Hanson, *Vice President*

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Luke Thoreson

Mike Nettles

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### Association Email

[info@bigwoodlake.com](mailto:info@bigwoodlake.com)

### Wood Chips Writer

Cris Peterson

### Area Contacts

Visit our website for county zoning, conservation, warden, and township contact information.

There is also a business directory for local service providers who are participating in our advertising program.



# Wood Lake's Wild Turkeys

by Cris Peterson



As I walked on Akermark Road nearly every morning this past summer, I encountered a flock...gaggle...rafter of about 20 wild turkeys. Some days they'd be right on the road and I'd think to myself "I really don't want to be chased by those birds...they're big and kind of scary looking" and I'd turn around and go the other way. Turkeys will actually chase humans especially in the spring.

On my way to the farm most mornings I'd see yet another flock or even two in the five miles between our cabin and my office. Most of you are probably used to seeing these flocks, but forty years ago they weren't in our area at all.

The first recorded mention of wild turkeys in Wisconsin came from Father Jacques Marquette in 1674 when he wrote "Pierre shot a deer, three bustards and three turkeys." Wisconsin's mixture of grasslands and hardwood forests are the perfect habitat for the birds, but they were hunted to near extinction in the early 1900's.

In the 1970's a device called a rocket net made it easier to capture birds live and relocate them. Wisconsin made a "bird-swap" deal with Missouri. Wisconsin sent some ruffed grouse to the Show-Me state and they sent us some wild turkeys. The trade was very successful and in the following decade hundreds of birds were introduced across Wisconsin.

In 1988 while driving along Hegge Road north of Alpha I encountered my first wild turkeys ever. They were so tame and so "dumb" that I could have easily mowed them down with my car. Since then, the wild turkeys have adapted and reproduced to almost nuisance levels.

Our new warden, Matt Weseli, reports that this past summer was one of the best ever for turkey reproduction. Many flocks had two hatches. The adult and juvenile turkeys strut through our yards at the lake and in the fields and woodlands. Along with the geese and the sandhill cranes, they make living in this neck of the woods truly remarkable.

## Did You Know?

By Cris Peterson

Grantsburg author / historian and Wood Lake resident, Sue Segelstrom, published a new book this year that would be a perfect Christmas gift for history buffs and Grantsburg enthusiasts. A Slice of History: Grantsburg in Postcards is a larger format than some of Sue's books and would make a perfect coffee table tome. Sue's contact information is in the Wood Lake Directory.



**The 30th Annual American Legion Fishing Contest will be held on February 10, 2024 from 9AM until 2PM.** Last year's event had to be canceled because the ice conditions were so terrible. Prizes are awarded for largest northern, bass, crappie and sunfish. Cash prizes include \$1000 for the all-around first place winner, and there are many other awesome prizes. Food and coffee will be available at Thoreson Park and that's where the raffles and door prizes will be announced. The actual ticket sales for the event will be set up farther out on the lake so it's not so clogged up at the park entrance. Join the fun!



If you're looking for something new and different to do in the area surrounding our lovely lake, check out the county tourism website at [burnettcountyfun.com](http://burnettcountyfun.com). It's a great resource for local events, businesses and general information.





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[www.facebook.com/BigWoodLakeWI](http://www.facebook.com/BigWoodLakeWI)

**Photo Contest:** Photographs (hard copy only) depicting “Nature Scenes”, “Life on the Lake” and “Big Wood Lake Fish” for 2024 will be accepted up to the start of the Fall Membership Meeting. Only 1 photograph for each category will be accepted per contestant. To enter the contest, you need to get your photo(s) to the meeting. You can bring the photo(s) with you to the meeting or have someone else bring it with them. If someone else brings them, please write the category you are competing for, your name and telephone number on the back of each photo. All contestants are also asked to send an electronic copy, if available, to [info@bigwoodlake.com](mailto:info@bigwoodlake.com). By submitting a photo, contestants are authorizing the Association to display the photo on the Association website and/or newsletter. Winners are determined by polling those present at the Fall Meeting on the best photograph depicting each category. Prizes will be awarded to winners and the winning photographs will be displayed on Association website. See website for more information.

## Congratulations to our 2023 Photo Contest Winners!

### Nature Scene

2023 Winner: Doug Segelstrom



### Life on the Lake

2023 Winner: Margie Champlin



### Big Wood Lake Fish

2023 Winner: Margie Champlin

