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# From The SHORELINE

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SPRING 1997

ALBERTA LAKE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

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## FROM THE EDITOR

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### *Newsletter Has A New Look*

It's been a while since the last issue of *From The Shoreline* was published. A number of organizational changes have occurred over the winter that will see ALMS communicating more regularly with its members. You will also notice that the newsletter has some new features that readers will find informative. The "Ecology" section will highlight a variety of topics on the biology of lake, wetland, stream, and riparian environments. "Field Notes" will highlight ongoing watershed research activities and feature a variety of best lake and watershed management practices that land owners can use. "LakeWatch" will profile the stewardship efforts of

individuals working hard to protect our lakes and watersheds. We will also report on our volunteers and their lake associations involved in the *LakeWatch Program*. This lake water quality monitoring program is co-run by ALMS and Alberta Environmental Protection. Finally, "News/Events" will feature notices of up and coming events that may be of interest to our readers.

As editor I welcome your suggestions. I can be also be reached by e-mail at:

**haekel@agric.gov.ab.ca. É**

*ALMS Now on the INTERNET*

ALMS is now linked into the world wide web. You can find us on the internet at our new address:

[www.biology.ualberta.ca/alms/home.htm](http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/alms/home.htm)

The site has a selection of lake and watershed links for you to browse. If you know of any interesting and useful websites, let us know and we'll add them to our link list. Be patient with us while the site is under construction. É

*Editor*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to spring! It won't be long until the ice begins to leave our lakes, bringing thoughts of fishing, swimming and the like. This winter has been an incredibly busy one for ALMS. We've enjoyed some very good successes, and experienced some very sad moments. It has been a roller-coaster kind of winter.

On March 3, 1997, ALMS lost a very good friend. **Bill Wearmouth**, who was instrumental in establishing ALMS and who served on the Board of Directors and as President and Past-President for several years, died in a water skiing accident in California. He was 68 years old.

Bill was the perfect example of someone who gave his time to the fullest to help anyone or any project in need. Whether it was ALMS, NALMS, the Pine Lake Restoration Society, the Winter Olympics in Calgary, or his family and friends. Bill lived life to the fullest, keeping up an adventurous lifestyle pace during his retirement years that would put any teenager to shame.

I had the opportunity to spend a considerable amount of time with Bill over the past 6 years. Despite being more than double my age, Bill treated me as an equal. To Bill, matters such as age or gender were irrelevant. While to many people Bill will always be remembered as a "do-er", never content to sit on the sidelines, I will always remember him for his friendly smile and warm personality. Included in this issue of the newsletter is a tribute to Bill, giving you some insight into his life and history. We'll miss him dearly.

On a brighter note, ALMS has begun the planning process to hold the 18th International Symposium of the North American Lake Management Society in 1998. This will be a very large event, with an expected turnout of 800-1,000 people. Part of the credit for having this large conference in Alberta can be attributed directly to the efforts of Bill Wearmouth. The

conference will be dedicated to his memory. The conference will be held at the world-class Banff Springs Hotel on November 11-13, 1998. We already have many sessions and workshops planned. Please see the enclosed preliminary brochure. We also need your help! This will be a big event. Please contact us if you would be willing to help out in any way, big or small. There are lots of small details, each of which that can be handled by a single person. Please help out.

From  
The **SHORELINE**

May 1997 Vol.6, No. 1

*From The Shoreline* is the official newsletter of the Alberta Lake Management Society (ALMS), providing a forum for the communication and exchange of information and experiences relating to the management of lakes and their watersheds.

**Editor:** Gerry Haekel

*From The Shoreline* is published four times each year in Winter (January), Spring (April), Summer (July), and Fall (October).

Articles submitted for publication must be received no later than **one month prior the month of publication.**

Please address all articles and letters to:

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The opinions and advice expressed in the newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily imply endorsement by the Society.

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And speaking of conferences, this year will be an exceptionally busy year for us. ALMS will be hosting a one-day workshop on lake management in Valleyview on Saturday, June 7, and we are considering another one-day workshop at Sylvan Lake, following up on one of our largest annual workshops ever, which was held last fall at Sylvan Lake.

We will also be holding our annual fall workshop in southern Alberta this year. The workshop will be held at Chestermere Lake, near Calgary, and will focus on lake and watershed management issues in the southern part of the province. The Chestermere Lake workshop will be held September 12-14. Stay tuned for more details, or contact our office. If you are interested in helping out with this workshop, or willing to be a presenter, please let us know.

We would like to get more of our members involved in the functioning of our Society, from conference planning to new initiatives that we are embarking on (please see the enclosed call for volunteers).

Finally, ALMS has made the move to the internet. Our web site is currently under construction, and will be regularly updated to include the latest information on workshops, conferences, Board activities, contact names, links to NALMS, and many other initiatives.

If you have any suggestions for what you would like to see on our web site, please contact us. Our Web Site address is:

[www.biology.ualberta.ca/alms/home.htm](http://www.biology.ualberta.ca/alms/home.htm)

In addition, the ALMS office has a new phone number:

(403) 492-1294.É

Brian G. Kotak

## LAKE WATCH

### *A Great Start To Making a Difference*

Recruiting eager volunteers to this, the first year of ALMS' lake monitoring program, "Alberta Lake Watch", proved to be easy. The overwhelming response by cottage owners wanting to play an active role in lake management was positively inspiring. Recognizing the need for sound scientific data on lakes within their jurisdictions, municipalities have also been eager to help in recruiting for the program. Indeed, if the program had been any more successful, we would have surpassed our funding and been forced to turn down volunteers.

Last summer dozens of volunteers graciously donated their time and boats to collect water quality data from seven recreational lakes across Alberta. In some cases this wealth of scientific information has already been put to good use to start formal Lake Management Plans in several areas.

All the data collected this past summer has been added to a large database that the Province uses to manage and protect Alberta's water resources.

### 1996 Alberta Lake Watch

- C Matcheyaw Lake
- C Wizard Lake
- C Big Lake, St. Alberta
- C Buffalo Lake, Buffalo Metis Settlement
- C Chickenhill Lake
- C Hardisty Lake
- C Jackfish Lake

A summary of the information obtained this year will be published in the 1996 Alberta Lake Watch Annual Report. The report is being prepared by ALMS in consultation with Alberta Environmental Protection.

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ALMS is also planning a number of informal workshops this year at some of the seven lakes participating in the program. This provides an opportunity to share information with the volunteers and to foster plans for remedial action where needed.

The reasons for participating in the program this year were as diverse as the varied interests of the many volunteers. Specific concerns included declining fish stocks, an over abundance of aquatic plants and algae, declining property values, shoreline access, erosion, health related matters (anything from swimmers itch to algal toxins) and boating activity.

The thread linking all of our volunteers was a common concern over declining water quality. There was general agreement among participants that poor water quality, if left unchecked, would eventually impact on the recreational and commercial value of our lakes.

The rewards of a volunteer program such as ours, are vast and far reaching. For the average citizen it provides an opportunity to make a difference beyond simply voting on local issues at Municipal election time. It's an educational experience that will heighten your awareness of environmental problems and make you a more effective voice come decision making time.

The scientific community and Government benefit substantially from the wealth of information made available for many lakes that, but for your help, would never have been studied. ALMS and Alberta Environmental Protection are greatly appreciative of your efforts - together we are making a difference!

Anyone interested in this year's Lake Watch Program should contact the ALMS business office at 492-1294 (Fax 492-8160). Volunteers should be prepared to commit to a 2-3 HOUR training session at the start of the summer and a 1-2 HOUR

sampling trip on their lake every 2 to 3 weeks.

Training by ALMS and Alberta Environmental Protection representatives could begin at your lake in late May to early June. All sampling equipment is provided for your use; we only require that you have access to a safe motor boat.

NOTE: Membership in the Alberta Lake Management Society is not a requirement for this program. **E**

*Chris Earle*

## **MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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The 1996/97 Board of Directors are:

- C** Dr. Brian Kotak (**President**)  
e-mail: kotak@compusmart.ab.ca
- C** Gerry Haekel (**Vice-President**)  
e-mail: haekel@agric.gov.ab.ca
- C** Steve Smart (**Treasurer**)
- C** Ron Zurawell (**Secretary**)
- C** Dr. Chris Earle (**Past President**)
  
- C** Micheal Agbeti -Edmonton
- C** Ed Chubocha - Leduc
- C** Sandra Cooke - Edmonton
- C** Norval Horner - Calgary
- C** Grant Johnson - Red Deer
- C** Gerry Knutson - Sylvan Lake
- C** John Lilly - Sherwood Park
- C** Pat Marriott - Edmonton
- C** Larry Martin - Calgary
- C** Mark Serediak - Edmonton

Feel free to contact any of the members through the ALMS office in Edmonton. We are available to answer your questions and discuss any lake and watershed management issues you may have. We can also put you into contact with other professionals in the community, at an academic institution, in government, or in industry. **E**

## **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS**

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ALMS is looking for volunteers willing to commit a few hours of their time to help us out on a number of projects. After the last general meeting, the board developed the following list of ideas and projects that the Society wished to see completed over the next two years.

- O** ALMS Display Board.
- U** Directory of "lake people" contacts from government, academia, and industry.
- U** A guide on how to set up a watershed or lake management association.
- U** A municipal development and planning guide for watershed protection.
- U** Lake & Watershed Factsheets.
- Y** Membership & Participation Strategies.
- P** Information Booklet on watercraft use issues.
- B** Workshop/conference planning guide.
- a** Reclamation projects.
- a** Fundraising Strategies.

No special skills are required and you don't need to live in Edmonton to contribute. Contact any of the Board members or the ALMS office by phone at (403) 492-1294 and **volunteer!** We look forward to working with you. **E**

## **ECOLOGY**

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### *Migrating Birds are Back*

Spring is heralded throughout Central Alberta when the **Prairie Crocus** (*Anemone patens*) begins to poke its pink flowers out of quickly melting snow and when pussy **willows** (*Salix spp.*), touched by the warming sun, burst from tightly wrapped winter buds. **Black-billed Magpies** (*Pica pica*) have been busy since the beginning of March collecting sticks

to build their roofed nests and the noisy **Blue Jay** (*Cyanocitta cristata*) and its mate have become suspiciously quiet guarding their nest site.

Spring also means the steady arrival of a large variety of birds migrating back to our lakes and backyards. After spending the winter in the southern United States or the tropics of Central and South America, birds are returning to pair up and breed.

Every cottage owner should keep a field guide on birds near their kitchen window to help identify avian visitors. Three guides I recommend you choose from include Peterson's Field Guide "Western Birds", the Golden Guide "Birds of North America" or the National Geographic Society's "Field Guide to the Birds of North America". Binoculars are also indispensable for identifying birds and for watching their behaviour.

Early arrivals to our region include small flocks of **Crows** (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*) and the occasional **American Robin** (*Turdus migratorius*). The arrival of the robin always signals the start of Spring by telling us its time to "cheeri-up, cheerily, cheeri-up". In late March, the male **Ruffed Grouse** (*Bonasa umbellus*) can be heard drumming from his "drumming log" in the Aspen Parkland region. Listen for a muffled thumping sound that starts slowly and steadily accelerates: "Bup... bup... bup... bup. . bup, bup, up, r-rrrrr". The peak of the **Golden Eagle** (*Aquila chrysaetos*) migration also occurs at this time over Mount Lorette in Kananaskis Provincial Park.

**Mountain Bluebirds** (*Sialia currucoides*) and **Tree Swallows** (*Tachycineta bicolor*) begin to show up in early April and are soon followed by **Red-Winged Blackbirds** (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) and **Yellow-Headed Blackbirds** (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) to our wetlands. Look for the males aggressively defending their territories from their cattail perches. Their song

is easily recognized by a liquid, gurgling "konk-la-ree"!

**Canada Geese** (*Branta canadensis*) and **Snow Geese** (*Chen caerulescens*) arrive by the thousands to stage on large shallow lakes like Beaverhill Lake, where they rest from their long flight. They will feed in nearby fields as they wait for the ice to melt in more northern regions. Watch for **Sandhill Cranes** (*Grus canadensis*) flying high overhead in mid-April, and **Red-Tailed Hawks** (*Buteo jamaicensis*) gliding in loose circles as they hunt for voles and mice that were so abundant this winter.

**White-Troated Sparrows** (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) will have returned to **Trembling Aspen** (*Populus tremuloides*) stands by the end of April. This sparrow's patriotic song "Oh, sweet Ca-na-da, Ca-na-da, Ca-na-da" is easily recognized.

Most of our ducks are also back on our lakes by now. Look for the complex and fascinating courtship display of a pair of **Western Grebes** (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) as they dance a synchronized water ballet for each other. Not to be missed!

Everything else seems to arrive in May. For those who want to see colourful **Warblers**, are best advised to visit the old growth forests of the Lac La Biche area or Cold Lake Provincial Park in the last week of May or first week of June. É

Gerry Haekel

### Look for Other Signs of Spring Activity

**Rainbow** and **Cutthroat Trout** begin to spawn in clear streams and rivers on the eastern slopes. Overwintering **Brook, Brown** and **Bull Trout** fry can also be seen. **Northern Pike** begin to spawn in shallow vegetated bays in many central Alberta lakes in late April.

**Wood Frogs, Boreal** and **Canadian Toads**, and the tiny but loud **Chorus Frogs** now call constantly at night from many wetlands. Look for gelatinous egg masses attached to vegetation or sticks in shallow water.

In central Alberta, the harmless **Plains** and **Red-Sided Garter Snakes** begin to emerge from their hibernacula (dens) in late March.

The insect world also awakens with lengthening days. Stoneflies will hatch on warm days, and Bumble and Honey Bees visit pussy willows to gather the seasons first pollen.

Finally, the dreaded **Mosquito** will also soon be back to pester us to no end throughout the summer. É

### NEWS & EVENTS

Coming soon to a community near you:

C **Valleyview Workshop** June 7, 1997 at Sturgeon Heights Community Hall, Sturgeon Lake.

C **1997 ALMS Annual Workshop** This years two day workshop will take place near Calgary at Chestmere Lake on Sept. 12-14. Watch for further details in the Summer newsletter.

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## FIELD NOTES

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A variety of field studies are actively underway in Alberta.

### < **Haynes Creek Watershed: Impact of Agriculture on Water Quality**

The Haynes Creek watershed, located 4 miles east of Lacombe, is the site of a water quality monitoring project designed to assess the effect of agricultural practices on water quality.

Stream sampling sites are located throughout the watershed and are monitored for various water quality attributes. The Haynes Creek water quality study started in the spring of 1995 and is continuing for the 1997 summer field season.

Alberta Agriculture, Food & Rural Development, and Alberta Environmental Protection have partnered with watershed producers for this project. The cooperation and commitment of area producers to the project has made it a success. A complete report summarizing the findings of this research project will be released this summer.

Contact Sandra Cooke at 427-3397 for more information. É

### < **Comparative effects of logging and natural disturbances on the ecology of boreal streams.**

A collaborative study by TROLS research group (U of A), National Hydrology Research Institute (Saskatoon) and Alberta-Pacific Forest Industries. This study will determine the effects of logging on streams in NE Alberta and place these effects into context by simultaneously examining how natural disturbances, including forest fires, floods, and beaver activity effect stream ecology.

### < **Utility of Riparian Buffer Strips in Mitigating Logging Effects on Lakes.**

A collaborative study between several Canadian universities, provincial and federal government agencies and the forest industry in Alberta. Current buffer strip regulations in Alberta are not based on sound scientific information. Many of the policies are in fact borrowed from other provinces, without knowing whether applying such regulations from other regions of Canada is valid.

This study examines how wide a forested buffer strip needs to be (or if they are needed at all) around lakes in northeastern Alberta. This

multimillion dollar study began in 1995 and will continue until 1999. The study examines a wide variety of parameters in lakes, including water chemistry, algae and weed (macrophyte) growth, aquatic insects, waterfowl, amphibians and fish.

While buffer strips are commonly thought solely as a way to protect aquatic ecosystems, these forested strips may also effect terrestrial plant and animal communities. These effects could be both positive and negative. For example, by leaving forested buffer strips along waterbodies, one may create corridors for forest fires or insect outbreaks along the waterbody. The study therefore focuses not only on the aquatic ecosystem, but takes a more holistic look at the whole landscape and all of its components. This is the largest forestry-related research program of its kind in the world.

Contact Dr. Brian Kotak in Athabasca at 1-800-661-5210. É

## **PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR THE 1998 NALMS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM IN BANFF**

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On November 11-13, 1998 ALMS will be hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> International Symposium of the North American Lake Management Society at the Banff Springs Hotel in Banff, Alberta.

The central theme for the symposium is *Cooperative Lake and Watershed Management: Linking Communities, Industry and Government*. This symposium will provide an excellent forum to discuss the benefits and challenges of developing management solutions which involve all stake-holder groups.

Stay tuned for further details in the Summer edition of the newsletter. É



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## **INFORMATION REQUEST**

ALMS is creating a directory of lake and watershed contacts for Alberta. Needed in particular are contacts for the various lake, cottage or recreational associations in your region. If you are a member of one or know of someone who is part of an association, we want to hear from you! Let's bring people with similar interests together. Please pass on to us a contact name and phone number. **É**

## **1996 SYLVAN LAKE WORKSHOP A RESOUNDING SUCCESS**

Every year, attendance at the workshop continues to grow as knowledge in the value of attending becomes more widely known. The Sylvan Lake Workshop was no exception in this regard. In all, 125 people actively participated in making this event a success.

A testament to the appeal of the workshop and the importance of the issues discussed was apparent - Alberta's public television network, ACCESS, videotaped the presentations for later broadcast in Alberta. A copy of the videotapes will be obtained by ALMS and added to our library of resources. The proceedings of most of the sessions are still being assembled and will arrive soon in your mailbox.

The response from the evaluation forms filled out by workshop participants was also positive (and greatly appreciated). To highlight:

- (1) the vast majority of respondents felt that a 2 day workshop on a Friday / Saturday was preferred,
- (2) the preferred location for the workshop was at one of Alberta's lake communities,
- (3) respondents liked the lecture format, although respondents also

indicated a desire for a practical or field component as well.

This information tells us we are on the right track and it will help us in planning future workshops.

See you out at our next annual workshop at Chestermere Lake in 1997. **É**

## **1998 SYMPOSIUM PLANNING TEAM SEEKS VOLUNTEERS**

Planning an international symposium takes a lot of work by a lot of people. Luckily we have some time to organize this event. With committed individuals like **you** lending your enthusiasm and skills, this event will become a success.

Many of the organizational committee's already have chairpersons to coordinate activities, however individuals are required to complete the various activities. All the activities are task oriented (i.e. broken down into small achievable tasks), therefore your contribution can be large or small. The key is to **get involved!**

The organizational committee's are:

- C Conference Coordination
- C Exhibitor Coordination
- C Fundraising
- C Poster Session
- C Technical Program
- C Publicity
- C Hosting/Hospitality
- C International Liason
- C Transportation
- C Banquet Program

Each of the planning committee's have a list of tasks needing to be done.

Contact the ALMS office to volunteer or to find out more information.

The *benefits* of volunteering include:

- C Community Involvement.
- C Organizational and planning experience for you resume.
- C Meet new people.
- C All kinds of other stuff! **É**

## **NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

All articles to the editor, etc. must be received by **July 22, 1997** to be considered for the Summer newsletter.

We welcome your letters, newsletter articles, event notices, and suggestions for improving the newsletter.

Let us know what's happening at your lake this summer! **É**

*Editor*

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