

# THE WATERSHED OBSERVER

Victoria Beach, Photo: Jesse Vanderhart

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**“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.”**

– American tennis player Arthur Ashe

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The Lake Winnipeg watershed continues to be a regular topic in the news, but the emerging theme of these stories is not always a positive one. Harmful algae blooms, zebra mussels and new research on microplastic pollution are reminders of the challenges we face when working on co-ordinated approaches to watershed management. Conflicts over the use and management of water resources highlight the need for decisions that utilize the best available research.

Evidence needs to be the foundation of watershed management policy and practices. The Lake Winnipeg Health Plan is our blueprint for taking action and advocating for the ecological health of our waters. We are developing and promoting the technical tools and expertise to implement this plan, such as the emerging network of citizens across Manitoba engaged in community-based monitoring (CBM) of phosphorus; you can read more about LWF’s CBM efforts on page 4 of this newsletter.

We all have a role to play in making Lake Winnipeg’s story a positive one. Joining LWF is one way citizens can take action. Together, we will make integrated watershed management an issue in which we all get involved.

– Roger Mollot, LWF President

Roger preparing for Cycling for Solutions 2017 on Vancouver Island’s Cowichan Valley Trail; Photo: Stephen Page



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### Lake Winnipeg Foundation

300-207 Fort St  
Winnipeg, MB, R3C 1E2  
Phone: 204-956-0436  
Email: [info@lakewinnipegfoundation.org](mailto:info@lakewinnipegfoundation.org)  
[lakewinnipegfoundation.org](http://lakewinnipegfoundation.org)

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L-R: Ron Thiessen, executive director of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society - Manitoba Chapter; Katrina Froese, education co-ordinator at FortWhyte Alive; Claire Herbert from the University of Manitoba; Alexis Kanu, LWF executive director; Photo: Marlo Campbell

## LWF INVESTS \$21,000 IN LOCAL WATER PROJECTS

Your ongoing support of our grants program continues to make a difference. In March, we announced a total of \$21,000 in new funding to:

- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) – Manitoba Chapter for its project: "Conserving the Boreal Forest for the Health of Lake Winnipeg"
- FortWhyte Alive for its project: "Winnipeg's Lake Winnipeg: Aquatic Education, Monitoring and Restoration towards Conservation"
- The Town of Niverville for its project: "Niverville Lagoon Bioremediation Project"
- University of Manitoba for its project: "Near Real-time Assessment of Algal Blooms and Nutrients in the Lake Winnipeg Basin's Other Great Lakes"

**We wish these local water champions success over the coming year!**

## Are you working to improve water quality in the Lake Winnipeg watershed?

Apply to LWF's grants program in fall 2017. Watch for eligibility criteria and application forms online.

## MANITOBA MUST MAINTAIN SAFEGUARDS FOR CLEAN WATER

The government of Manitoba is proposing changes to the legislation and regulation that govern the hog industry. The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act amends the Environment Act by repealing legislated limitations to the industry's growth as well as the ban on winter spreading of manure.

The prohibition against spreading manure on farmers' fields when the soil is frozen and unable to absorb nutrients is a critical pollution-prevention measure – arguably, the most important action taken to protect Lake Winnipeg in the past two decades. LWF is advocating that this ban remain enshrined in provincial legislation, as well as in regulations that flow from the Environment Act.

The Red Tape Reduction and Government Efficiency Act will come before the legislature again in fall 2017. As a lake-lover, your voice matters. Let your MLA know that you support strong measures to protect Manitoba's water. The legislated ban on winter spreading of manure safeguards water security and protects public trust in our agricultural sector.

### Follow LWF's policy efforts online

This spring, the provincial government also proposed changes to the Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation (LMMMR), which governs where, when and how livestock manure can be used as an agricultural fertilizer.

Despite past calls for a review of the environmental sustainability of existing regulations, no evidence has been provided to support the proposed changes. LWF has asked the government of Manitoba to provide its citizens with robust data on the effectiveness of current and proposed regulatory measures before making any amendments to the LMMMR and associated legislation.

**Read LWF's position on proposed LMMMR changes on our website, under Resources for Citizens, where we post all our government submissions.**

# LAKE WINNIPEG HEALTH PLAN PROGRESS



## MONITORING OUR WATERWAYS

### FINDING PHOSPHORUS: THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY-BASED MONITORING

While all human activities can affect water quality, the closer you are to Lake Winnipeg, the bigger your impact will be. Identifying phosphorus hotspots across Lake Winnipeg's vast watershed will help us focus our efforts and give us the greatest return on investment when it comes to taking action to reduce potentially harmful algae blooms.

LWF's community-based monitoring (CBM) network is leveraging the power of citizen action by engaging Manitoba volunteers in water sampling and data analysis to support evidence-based decision-making.

In 2016, citizen scientists collected 200 samples from 12 sites, particularly during the spring melt when most phosphorus is flushed into our waterways. Samples were then analyzed in a lab to measure phosphorus concentration and calculate the amount of phosphorus being exported off our landscapes.

#### Key findings from our first year

The CBM network reported higher phosphorus exports than have ever previously been reported in Manitoba. We also found considerable differences between sampling sites. For example, the watershed upstream of the Manning Canal, an area with intense agricultural activity and a growing urban centre (Steinbach), had a much higher phosphorus export than the adjacent Upper Seine River watershed, which drains a largely forested landscape.

Monitoring data becomes more useful the more you have – and so far, we have only one year. Still, local efforts suggest phosphorus hotspots exist in Manitoba and CBM can help us identify them.

LWF's CBM network is a valuable component of adaptive, 21st-century water monitoring. It provides a cost-effective way to sample more sites more frequently, increasing our understanding of localized phosphorus exports and improving land and water management.

Water monitoring activities are already well underway for 2017. As we collect more data, we will continue to ensure that it is available to both Manitobans and lake-lovers across the country.



Chelsea on the Assiniboine River with an integrated water sampler used by CBM volunteers; Photo: Marlo Campbell

### MEET LWF'S CBM CO-ORDINATOR

Chelsea Lobson joined LWF in January and is responsible for recruiting and supporting CBM volunteers, analyzing collected water samples and sharing findings back to the community.

"My favourite thing about CBM is that it gets citizens outside sampling and interacting with their environment," Chelsea says.

Chelsea spent early spring prepping equipment and training network participants in advance of the snow melt. LWF's second monitoring season will see over 1,000 samples collected at upwards of 65 sites in six conservation districts.

"The most interesting part of my job so far has been meeting all the conservation district staff and volunteers from across Manitoba," she says. "Connecting with people who have so much knowledge on their watershed has been a great experience. I'm learning so much from them!"

## SUPPORTER SPOTLIGHT

### TURNING PASSION INTO ACTION

With teachers for parents, Paul Trevenen grew up spending entire summers at the family's Traverse Bay cottage. "It's my favourite place on the entire planet," he says.

Collecting rocks and picking berries were two of his mom's favourite activities, and Paul continues both to this day. He and his wife Anna have passed down other cottage traditions to their own kids; daughters Emma and Lily both love water and are avid swimmers.

Paul's love for Lake Winnipeg has fueled a desire to keep it clean. Picking up beach litter has been a lifelong habit and it's how he first connected with LWF in early 2016, looking for more information about local resources.

What he found was a community – and a perfect fit.

"What LWF is trying to achieve, it just seemed like it really aligned with my own personal goals and my own personal beliefs," he says.

Paul has since become an enthusiastic LWF member. Last summer, he co-ordinated an Albert Beach clean-up, participated in Walk for Water at Victoria Beach and organized Beats on the Beach, a concert in support of LWF at Saffies General Store.

Beats on the Beach 2017 is already confirmed for Aug. 12, and Paul is keen to plan another area clean-up, too. He says LWF has shown him he's not alone and given him the opportunity to make a difference.

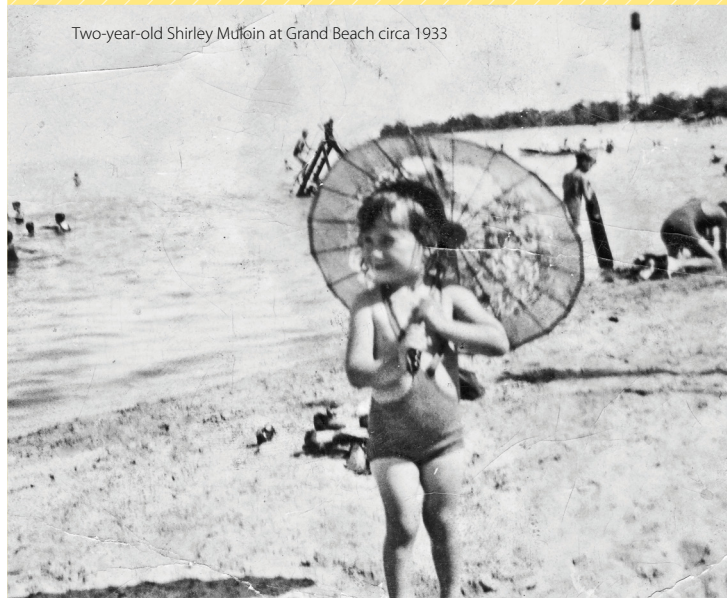
"It's wonderful to know that I can be a small part of helping out, which is what I really want to do."



### PUT YOUR FAMILY HISTORY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Join LWF this summer as we celebrate cottage life with a vintage photo exhibit curated by you!

"Lake Winnipeg Memories" launches July 3 at The Beach Exchange, located across from Saffies General Store in Albert Beach.



Help us showcase the essence of Lake Winnipeg summers: from unforgettable sunsets to wish-we-could-forget fashions.

#### To participate:

- Scan your favourite family snaps and vintage photos
- Email them, along with a story, to [events@lakewinnipegfoundation.org](mailto:events@lakewinnipegfoundation.org)

We'll print your shots and add them to our living exhibit, which will run throughout July and August. And make sure to join us on Aug. 19 for "Bow ties and board shorts" – a closing gala with a beachy twist!

Special thanks to long-time LWF supporters Lise, Jerry and the team at Saffies for partnering with us on this event.

## CHEERS TO LAKE WINNIPEG



Sable and Tyler Birch in Barn Hammer's tap room; Photo: PTASH Film & Photography

### LOCAL BEER FOR LOCAL WATER

Imagine a perfect Manitoba summer day. Chances are, the picture in your mind involves being out at the lake with a cold beer in hand.

You're not alone. This summer, we're celebrating Lake Winnipeg and local beer – a quintessential pairing for many – by showcasing local breweries and limited-edition craft brews.

Tyler and Sable Birch are the co-owners of Barn Hammer Brewing Co., a Winnipeg brewery and tap room that opened last summer. Manitoba's craft beer industry is growing fast and Barn Hammer is part of an exciting, eclectic local scene.

"We were hoping to be a small neighbourhood attraction," says Tyler of the Wall Street location. "We get a lot of bike traffic, a lot of foot traffic."

The tap room is a friendly, welcoming place to grab a pint with friends. It's also a place where people still unfamiliar with the concept of a 'growler fill station' can learn more about what makes micro-breweries unique.

"We still get probably four or five people a day that are like, 'I haven't been in a place like this,'" Tyler says. "Being a part of the education is nice."

The couple has strong connections to Lake Winnipeg; Tyler remembers childhood summers

spent at his best friend's Lester Beach cabin, while Sable's family has cottaged in Grand Marais for generations. Her love for the lake has been nurtured over the years by her parents: her mom is a henna artist at Grand Beach and her dad is a regular in the annual sand castle-building competition.

They continue to visit Lake Winnipeg every summer. "We go there to just be outside and have fires," says Tyler.

"It's an escape place for me," Sable adds. "Being close to a body of water has always been calming."

Giving back is also something they agree on. The tap room hosts monthly "Barn Raising" events at which a portion of sales are donated to charities chosen by staff. LWF was the first recipient.

Barn Hammer will be the first brewery showcased as part of LWF's summer celebration, and plans are in the works for a Lake-Winnipeg-themed gose. "It's a light, kind of sour, salty beer that's refreshing – and something that even people who don't really like beer can like," Tyler explains.

Partnering with LWF is an opportunity to create new connections between lake-lovers and beer-lovers, Sable says. With a foot in both worlds, she and Tyler are the perfect pair to launch this new initiative. "It's really exciting to be able to collaborate with the Lake Winnipeg Foundation like this."

**Our summer beer series kicks off just in time for the July long weekend. We've got more local breweries to showcase and exciting events planned. Stay tuned to be the first to know!**

## GATHER TOGETHER IN GIMLI

### KICK UP YOUR HEELS AT OUR NEWEST EVENT

We're thrilled to be partnering with Farmers Hall, located just outside of Gimli, for what will surely be a special night. Formerly the United Farmers' Community Hall, this local gathering place has been restored by new owners Elaine and Darrell Klym, and is once again operating as a community dance hall.

"While scouting around the family farm one fall, Darrell and I decided to peek into the windows of the boarded-up remnants of the hall," Elaine says. "We began reminiscing about the many functions we had attended and felt a real strong pull to see it returned to its former glory."

Originally from Riverton, Elaine's love for Lake Winnipeg runs deep.

"If you grow up in the Interlake you just can't deny your connection and draw to the lake," she says. "I knew that one day I'd like to work with the Lake Winnipeg Foundation – and here we are today, looking forward to an awesome event to raise funds and awareness while celebrating life, community and music. It's the perfect partnership!"

Visit our website throughout the summer for further details about this event – and many others!

Photo: Jennifer Krawchuk Photography



Farmers Hall is located on Highway 231, two miles west of Highway 8. Join us on Aug. 18 for music, food and lots of fun – all in support of a healthy Lake Winnipeg!

*cut mail-in form here*

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300-207 Fort St. Winnipeg, MB, R3C 1E2

OR



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# Join us this summer!



Victoria Beach, Photo: Paul Mutch

Look for your **Walk for Water 2017** pledge form inside.



Lake Winnipeg Foundation  
300-207 Fort St.  
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