

The Dock Post



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

Lake Ada Needs Your Support!



The Ada Lake Association has a range of programs led by the board and other volunteers in pursuit of our mission to preserve and safeguard the lake for generations to come. These include water quality testing, fish stocking, nesting support and monitoring of our loon population, monitoring of aquatic invasive species, and shoreline restoration. The Lake Association also provides financial support for the annual picnic. We need your contributions to continue these efforts into 2025 and beyond!

Thanks to the hard work of our association president, Brian Tracy, you can now update your membership dues, make additional donations, and maintain your contact information electronically on the website at www.lakeada.org. If you'd prefer to update your membership and/or make additional contributions by mail, a contribution form is included in this issue of the Dockpost to print out. Whatever the way, please support Lake Ada today!

Volume 41 Number 3

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Association Calendar

May 17 - Board Meeting
9:30 am | Ponto Town Hall & Virtual

June 14 - Board Meeting
9:30 am | Ponto Town Hall & Virtual

July 12 - Board Meeting
8:30 am | Ponto Town Hall & Virtual

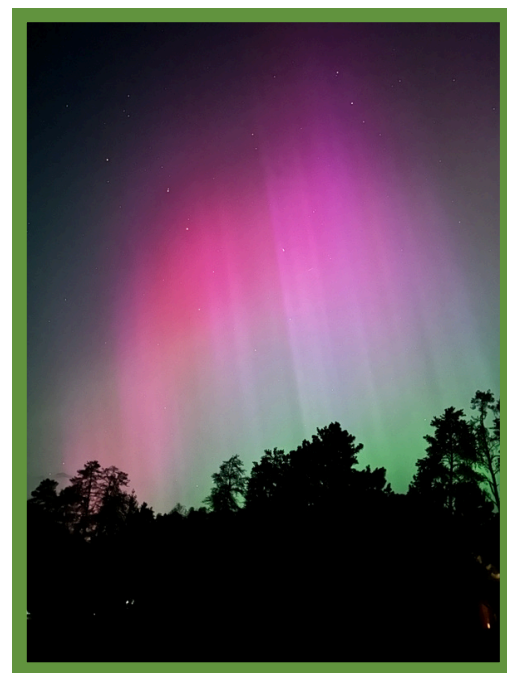
Aug. 9 - Annual Picnic
Location TBD

Sept. 13 - Board Meeting
8:30 am | Ponto Town Hall & Virtual

Starry, Starry Night

This year brought many exciting celestial events starting with the full eclipse in April, followed by a colorful show from the northern lights in May and June at Lake Ada. On any summer night, the dark skies of northern Minnesota are a great place to see satellites, “shooting stars” or meteor showers, and the awe of the Milky Way and many constellations and planets that you cannot see in a more populated area.

The constellations and the night sky have been important throughout human history, providing a navigational guide, inspiring folklore and providing valuable information about our universe, but today, most people never see the beauty and awe of a dark starry night due to an over abundance of lighting.



Light pollution isn't just a problem for stargazing. Fish and wildlife rely on the natural cycles of light and dark to navigate, hunt, and reproduce. Artificial light can interfere with spawning and feeding, and young fish are especially sensitive to light pollution; they may be more easily spotted by predators or become disoriented and unable to navigate. It can also interfere with trees and other plants' perception of day and night in damaging ways, such as delaying leaf fall and dormancy in autumn, which is crucial for surviving winter, or encouraging them to bud out too early in the spring when the days are still short. For people, exposure to excessive light at night can interfere with our circadian rhythms—our body's natural sleep-wake cycle—making it harder to get a good night's rest.

Lake Ada is a place to get away from the hustle and bustle and bright lights of town and enjoy dark, quiet nights around the campfire, or on the dock watching for shooting stars. Here are some things you can do to help our fish, trees and wildlife stay healthy, keep our night skies dark for all to enjoy, and save some money on your electric bill:

- Turn outdoor lights off when you're not outside.
- Avoid dock lights that are solar activated to stay on all night; you should be able to turn them off or use a timer to limit their use.
- Use a timer or motion detector to limit the amount of time any outdoor lights or lawn decorations are on.
- Choose light fixtures that cast light downward on the area you're trying to illuminate, instead of shining up or out.
- For existing lights, you can purchase glare shields (pictured) that direct the light where you want it and don't shine into the lake or your neighbor's yard.



Shoreline Project Site Visit Follow Up: Native Grass Mix Provides a Beautiful, Low Maintenance Lawn

In 2022, the Stalboergers on the north shore of Lake Ada helped launch our Lake-Friendly Shoreline Program by signing up to get a free site visit with technicians from one of our local soil and water conservation district. Each site visit results in a customized report that identifies how to strengthen your shoreline and reduce runoff into the lake.

They already had a healthy wildflower buffer along the shoreline, which they had seeded over multiple years. Their issue was a lot of erosion and troughs throughout their front yard, where they wanted a nice smooth green surface for enjoying cornhole and other yard games with their family.

Their report suggested replacing their lawn with a native grass mix. Native grasses have deeper roots, so they are more drought tolerant, absorb runoff before it gets to the lake, and prevent the unevenness of erosion.

The Stalboergers brought in compost soil to cover the existing weed/grass/dirt base then seeded the new “pasture blend” mix. They used a non phosphorus starter-fertilizer at seeding and since then just the nutrients from the lake water. During the first season, they watered a couple of times each weekend when at the cabin, but didn’t even need to set up a sprinkling system.

Just one year later, and the results were amazing! The native grass produced a lush lawn that stayed green all the way into November without watering! Check out the before and after pictures.



If you’d like to arrange a site visit for this spring with the Cass County Soil and Water Conservation District to learn how to beautify and strengthen your yard and shoreline, scan this QR code to set up an appointment:



The Pine River Has a New Look



A gated dam that had held back the waters of Norway Lake in downtown Pine River for more than a century was removed in 2022. The water now tumbles over staircase-like boulders or “riffles” that stretch over several hundred feet, with pools in between.

They’re designed to concentrate the flow in the center of the channel, reducing the risk of the river overflowing and eroding its banks, and debris tends to flow over the top of the rocks instead of getting caught. Aging dams are a safety concern, with failing structures often jammed with years of sediment and debris, and Pine River is one of about 75 places around Minnesota where rock rapids have begun to replace dams, beginning in 1994.

The DNR has helped cities design and pay for the projects to improve safety and habitat for fish and other aquatic species, such as freshwater mussels. There’s typically funding for two or three projects a year through the state’s Outdoor Heritage Fund.

Spring Raking? Not So Fast.

Don’t be too quick to rake - waiting until late spring has several benefits for your lawn as well as birds, bats, amphibians and fish who need insects to eat:

1 - Protecting Beneficial Insects: Many beneficial insects and pollinators winter in the leaf litter, and raking too early when they are still dormant can disturb or kill them. Beneficial insects feed fish and birds, and spiders and beetles prey on other garden pests, preventing the need for pesticides.

2 - Healthy Soil and Better Plant Growth: By leaving leaves and organic debris in place a bit longer, you give your plants and grass time to benefit from the natural composting process. This can lead to healthier soil and more vibrant plant growth.

3 - Avoiding Lawn Damage: Wet, soggy lawns in early spring can be easily damaged by raking. Waiting until the ground has dried out a bit can prevent tearing up grass roots and causing harm to your lawn.

A Story for the Lake Ada Little Ones

One foggy fall day around Lake Ada, in the big forest full of towering trees and falling leaves, there lived a curious little chipmunk named Charlie. Charlie was a little guy with fluffy fur, bright eyes, and the cutest curled tail. Every autumn the forest would come alive with falling golden leaves which meant it was time to gather acorns to store for winter. The forest had many trees that grew delicious acorns, which Charlie loved to stash in his cozy little burrow.

Charlie liked to see if he could gather more acorns than his other chipmunk friends. It was fun to see how many he could collect and store during a day's time. One day Charlie gathered over 100 acorns!

While gathering acorns, the other chipmunks were talking about finding a special acorn before winter set in. They called it The Golden Acorn. The other chipmunks said The Golden Acorn was magical since it gave the chipmunk who possessed it special powers over the forest.



Charlie's search for The Golden Acorn took him around the shoreline of Lake Ada. But while Charlie was searching for his special prize, he met up with a group of squirrels playing in the trees. Charlie loved to scurry up and down the tree trunks and laughed at how crazy the squirrels were chasing each other from tree to tree.

While exploring around Little Lake Ada, Charlie saw a family of beavers moving branches and twigs to their den. Like Charlie, the beavers were preparing for winter by making sure their den was warm and secure.

He asked Boris, the youngest beaver, whether he had seen any sign of The Golden Acorn. Boris shook his head not, but promised Charlie he would keep his eyes open in case the special acorn appeared.

A Story for the Lake Ada Little Ones

Charlie's search for The Golden Acorn took him all around Lake Ada. While searching, Charlie saw a herd of deer running through the forest. He tried to catch up to them, but they were running so fast.

Suddenly, Charlie figured out why the deer were running so fast. Charlie saw two black bears wandering through the woods. Frightened, Charlie dug a little hole and crawled inside. Being very quiet, Charlie heard the bears' footsteps, but then silence. As Charlie crawled up out of his hole, he saw the bears walking away from him. Charlie sighed a big sigh of relief and went on with his day.

It was getting late in the day and Charlie had seen no signs of The Golden Acorn. As Charlie was walking back to his burrow to rest for the night, he ran across The Wise Old Loon by the water's edge. Charlie asked The Wise Old Loon if she had seen The Golden Acorn. The loon smiled, looked at Charlie, and said,

"Charlie, The Golden Acorn isn't a real acorn. What The Golden Acorn means to us, as the animals who live around Lake Ada, is showing respect for the peaceful, beautiful, and natural surroundings of Lake Ada.

The Golden Acorn teaches us to take care of our forest, the land, and the water." If we do that, then The Golden Acorn will take care of us for years and years to come."

Charlie nodded his head in agreement. He loved the lake, and its surroundings. He was happy to call Lake Ada home.



And with that, Charlie crawled into his little burrow and shut his eyes for the night.

The End

By Scott VanBeck



Tired of writing checks and licking stamps? You can also update your membership and contact information and pay dues on the website @ www.lakeada.org

Ada Lake Association Annual Membership

Name(s) _____
Home Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____ Phone _____

Your dues support Lake Ada in many ways including
monitoring lake health, communication of lake events, and the annual Lake Ada picnic!
\$10.00 Membership for 2025
(This \$10 membership is not tax-deductible) \$10.00

Tax-Deductible Donations

We need your support to preserve and safeguard the health of our lake for generations to come.
Please consider giving a tax-deductible donation to Ada Lake Association.

Contributor \$1-50 Sustainer \$51-199 Benefactor \$200 or more

Designate Your Gift:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Reserve Fund	<input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries
<input type="checkbox"/> Ada Lake-friendly Shoreline Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Area of Greatest Need

Total Paid: Membership + Donation = \$ Checks payable to **Ada Lake Association**

Mail to: **Ada Lake Association, P.O. Box 202, Pine River, MN 56474**

Thank for your Generous Support of Ada Lake Association!