

Executive Director Highlights 2013-2014

- The greenbelts installed at the Summit Village Beach Club and Butch's fared fairly well after a hard winter. We had to replace about 1/8 of the SVBC planting and are preparing to do the same at Butch's. I do not think traditional plantings would have done nearly as well. Thanks go out to member Pine Hill Nursery for their generous donation and discounts on the new plants.
- In August of last year, Lois Maclean became our new office assistant. Lois has been an excellent addition to our organization and made the transition so smooth. We are grateful to her dedication and commitment to our organization.
- The Dole Family Foundation provided a grant to the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to complete a plant survey of Lake Bellaire and Clam Lake. This extensive survey took almost 1 month to complete. Only one additional spot of Eurasian watermilfoil (adjacent to Butch's) was discovered. Our 2014 observations revealed that EWM was back at Butch's and the Harbor, but manageable with the benthic barriers. TLA has prepared a permit application to the MDEQ to use benthic barriers on the previously known locations (Butch's, Alden Harbor & the embayment between Lone Tree Point & Stony Point). The benthic barriers have been purchased from the donation we received from the Dole Family in 2013.
- Big thanks to Dean Branson, Gary Knapp and Lois Maclean for their hard work re-activating ACUTE to address the threats of the TCE Plume.
- The Local Government Officials meeting to educate on water quality and watershed issues was held in March. Mark Stone was a key speaker discussing the issues we face with water levels throughout our watershed. All presentations are available on our website. The 2015 event will take place in April.
- The Dockside and Gordy Shafer stayed true to his matching grant challenge for funding the SEOP. We added Water Awareness Day this year to assist in finding a permanent funding source. While small for its first run (146 attendees), there is a commitment of several other organizations and TLA to continue the event. We raised over \$1300 in donations. It has been scheduled for July 26, 2015 to coincide with the Alden Fun Run and Alden Men's Club Rummage Sale.
- The Grass River Large Woody Debris Project appears to be a SUCCESS. Formal evaluations are taking place as I write. The project was installed in September of 2013. Mark Stone, Fred Sittel and Haley from GRNA have identified new locations for a future install once permitting has been obtained.
- The Joint Education Program topics included "The Dam Facts" on June 17 at Thurston Park in Central Lake and "Outdoors in Antrim" on August 12
- We expanded our Education Program this year to include 2 workshops on Septic Maintenance and New Technologies.
- TLA co-sponsored the Boater's Safety Class with Friends of Clam Lake, Elk Skegemog Lakes Association and Intermediate Lake Association. The events took place this past spring at each of our 4 high schools and was well attended.
- Maury Creek Management Plan: Over the past decade, TLA has been collecting information about our lakes and streams. Since watersheds cannot manage themselves, your TLA Board have embarked on a mission to create sub-watershed management plans of the creeks impacting the Grass River. The 1st project is Maury Creek. A steering committee was established and the process is under way. Funding for this project comes from the generous grant provided to us via Hildorf Foundation.
- The 2014 High School Interns are finalizing their report for the summer. It was a great program, with the Interns focusing on providing technical information for the Maury Creek Management Plan and preparing a handbook "The Hydrolab for Dummies."
- As you may be aware, there was no "Short's to Short's" Paddle this year. A new nonprofit has been established and for 2015 there will be a new event "Paddle Antrim." "Paddle Antrim" will be a 3 day event starting in Ellsworth and finishing in Elk Rapids. The nonprofit consists of board members from all parts of the County, including: chamber directors, Short's, elected officials, lake boards, and interested citizens. TLA will be providing assistance to the board, specifically dealing with logistics.
- Volunteers worked with the DNR this summer to provide the AIS Landing Blitz. AIS stands for Aquatic Invasive Species. The volunteers talked with boat launchers to discuss the importance of cleaning boats to stop the spread of invasives from lake to lake.
- We continued to man booths at the area festivals, the fair and speak at local clubs and organization meetings about our mission. I could not have do it without the help of great volunteers.
- Executive Director's Volunteer of the Year Award: I would like to take this final thought and honor a TLA member for which I would not have been able to function without this past year. Due to their dedication and commitment to TLA – I was able to serve the TLA membership and our watershed to the best of my ability. Thank you for everything you do **Becky Norris**. You are a role model for all of us, both here and in heaven.