



Photo: Tom Moser

A Message from Your President

Where did the summer go? Seems like just a few weeks ago it was fishing season opener. Perhaps it has to do with how wet (and relatively cool) it's been all spring and summer but, as they say, it is what it is. Just heard from one of my brothers in Cooper Landing Alaska and he has been on stand-by evacuation notice for the past week as they battle forest fires around the area in which he lives, so I guess I will take the rainy weather any day rather than the opposite extremes. Now that the Labor Day weekend is behind us the Northwoods lakes will be able to take a breather and get ready for that frozen water stuff, but until then, I hope that all of you are able *to* enjoy the beautiful fall season with all its vibrant palette of colors.

For those of you who missed the send-off party for Audrey & Larry Sanderson, it was a really great event with so many fellow neighbors around the lake. On the way home I commented to Mary on what a great bunch of friendly association members we have. Everyone seems to really have a great time when we all get together and there is a real concern among us over the quality of our

cherished lake. Thanks for all you do in your efforts to keep the Diamond a true diamond!

Well, I see we now have a new chip seal surface on N. Diamond Lake Drive as well as Ryberg Road. The bumps are still there but hopefully it will help the underlying pavement last a few years more before needing to be completely replaced. Many of you have also probably noticed the large replacement culvert sitting near the boat landing. I understand that that structure will be in place within the next couple of weeks and it will be interesting to see how long they will have to keep the road closed during its placement since it is in one long piece. I'm hoping it's not more than a full day at the most.

I was recently approached by one of our newer lake residents and asked for a reference for a contractor that can perform quality log restoration/chinking work. Many of you know that we had our cabin given a face lift and we are very pleased with the outcome. If anyone else is interested in having this kind of work done on their place, please feel free to call and I will be more than happy to share the details.

If anyone is interested in snowmobiling with us this winter, give us a call as we would love to have the company. Until then, have a great rest of 2019.

Frosty Palmer



Long Enough? The new 5 foot diameter culvert ready to be installed beneath/ across Pioneer Rd. near our boat launch. This will replace the much smaller diameter pipe that currently brings the outflow from Crystal Lake into Diamond and (hopefully) accommodate larger rain events in the future. -RJ

Comings and Goings on the Lake

We are sad to be saying farewell to Audrey and Larry Sanderson, founding members of the Diamond Lakers Association and long-time nurturers of the human and natural ecology of the lake. Audrey founded this newsletter and kept it going for more than two decades and Larry likewise stewarded our finances as Treasurer of the organization. We wish them well as they transition back to Washington State to spend more time close to family the year around.

Also departing this fall are Wayne and Sue Weege, long-time DL members and co-anchors of the community near the end of

Canterbury Trail. Sue has noted the subtle beauty of the small pond behind their cabin near the point and hopes the next owners will enjoy it as much as they have. Our best wishes as they return to Arkansas year-round.

We are pleased to welcome another new family to the Diamond Lakers Association this summer. Tom and Lynne McNutt came to Diamond Lake as the result of a recent home sale. If you see a new face in the neighborhood on North Diamond Lake Rd., please introduce yourself and welcome them.

Tom and Lynne McNutt

Lynne writes: after a long cabin search we found our place on Diamond Lake. Our main home is in Hudson. Tom is retired from a sales career and Lynne retired from a finance/human resources career at 3M. We have two children: Michael, 31, lives in Boiling Springs, SC and is a Plant Manager. Andrea, 28, lives in New Richmond, WI with her German Shepherd, Regal, and teaches kindergarten in Amery. When not at the lake, Lynne enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, cooking and learning new things. Tom enjoys yard work, golf, and fishing. We have been enjoying our time at the lake, especially having our children visit and watching Regal swim (he can't get enough of it!). We are looking forward to new memories and friendships. Go Vikings!

Update on Our AIS Monitoring System

As reported in the spring newsletter, the DL Board authorized an upgrade to our AIS camera and monitoring system at the boat launch, enabling us to upload videos via a cell tower link and then review them on a website.

The upgrade occurred in late June and the improvements are substantial. Triggering on actual launches is much improved, we now have an accurate time stamp with each video

recorded, and the resolution of the images is very good.

While still not perfect (our system, perhaps like your cell phone, struggles at times with only fair connectivity in the “dip” of the boat launch), our videos are doing the job that is needed. Thus far we have reported one suspicious boat entry to the DNR, but perhaps more importantly, the system serves as a potent reminder to everyone to check their boat for hitchhiking vegetation.

Due to the persuasive efforts of Board Members Raye Lahti (spokesperson), Dianne Klump, Jesse Meschievitz and Ed Wallen, we received a grant of \$750 from the Town of Grand View that will partially offset annual costs associated with operating the AIS system. More about this in a report from the annual meeting, below.



Fish Boil and potluck following the Annual Meeting on July 20th hosted by Monica and Ed Wallen.

Annual Meeting Report – Finances and 2020-21 Dues

Complete minutes from the July 20th annual meeting are appended to this newsletter below, but the discussion about budget and dues deserves some additional explication. As noted in the minutes, the balance in the treasury as of the meeting date was approximately \$4700. Including funds com-

mitted and income anticipated to the end of the year, we expect to end the summer with a balance of about \$4300.

Income and expenses this year were approximately equal at around \$2400. We had one-time expenses for the AIS camera system and recurring costs that accounted for most of the outlays. We received a grant of \$750 from the Town of Grand View that partially offset the fixed annual costs of the camera system and we anticipate that help continuing in the future. But it is clear that even with this grant, **our expenses in the years to come will outstrip our income**, which otherwise derives just from our dues.

During the meeting discussion on this issue, there was solid support expressed for the utility and value of the AIS camera system as a proactive investment in protecting the lake environment as well as property values that could decline if Eurasian Milfoil invades. At the same time we all recognize that it is not a fail-safe guarantee that it can't happen. There was also discussion of employing additional human monitors at busy times at the boat launch, while noting that this would involve substantial additional costs.

Pursuant to these budget issues, there was a lively discussion about raising our annual dues to pay for AIS monitoring and also enable the treasury to continue growing slowly to provide a ‘contingency fund’ should we be hit with large expenses associated with invasives or another unanticipated emergency. This slow growth of the treasury balance has been a steadfast feature of our operations in years past, and is why we now have a positive balance of around \$4.3k, thanks largely to the careful management of former treasurer, Larry Sanderson.

After discussing several options, including having a separate AIS fund with donations, a two-tiered dues system, and simply raising the dues, a motion was made (from the floor)

to increase dues from \$30 to \$50 per cabin next year. This received overwhelming support in the discussion and was passed unanimously by a voice vote. Including proxy votes that were allocated for the meeting, the vote count was more than half the total DL membership, with no votes against. As several speakers pointed out, \$50 is still a ‘very small amount’ in this day and age in terms of protecting a valued investment. Also, as a practical matter, for those who buy winter propane, it is still a fraction of the savings members can now obtain from two of the local distributors.

As Treasurer, I must say that I was not anticipating this outpouring of support for a dues increase. While I have documented the need for an increase and I support the strategy of growing the balance slowly going forward, I do have one reservation.

As I have noted previously in these pages, the Diamond Lakers Association enjoys a perhaps unequalled level of support from property owners around the lake. At over 80% participation this year, it is the envy of other associations, and is a testament to the support of so many of us for maintaining the environment and values of Diamond Lake.

But I would feel badly about losing members if we make the cost too burdensome. I think we all benefit from the membership of families who only visit the lake occasionally, and those who may be on fixed incomes, and those whose properties are now for sale - all potential reasons to allow membership to lapse next year.

My feeling about this on balance is that we need to respect the strong show of support for the dues increase to \$50 next year as a necessary step to keep up with costs. But I also want to keep the membership percentage buy-in very high. So I would encourage anyone who would like to remain a member in 2020-21 and for whatever reason feels the

amount is too much, just let me know in June when the dues call comes out.

Bob Jacobel
DL Treasurer

New Wisconsin Boating Regulations Brochure from the DNR

This year the DNR has updated its website with a new brochure on *Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities*. While there don’t appear to be major changes to the rules themselves, modifications to the formatting make the essential points easier to find and follow. These now include separate sections for boating wake and speed limits, rules for towing skiers etc., and personal watercraft (PWC) rules. The slow-no-wake zone for boats within 100 feet of shoreline and other craft has been emphasized as is the 200 feet no-wake zone for PWC’s.

Most of us have probably seen a range in compliance relative to these Wisconsin State Regulations on Diamond Lake, from very respectful operators to those few who seem completely unaware of them. Particularly dangerous are boaters towing youngsters at high speed and accelerating through the large wakes without any spotter accompanying an eligible driver. Also worrisome are PWC’s “wake jumping” at high speed and/or in tight turns.

Stressing safety above all else, the DNR regulations prohibit reckless operation of any watercraft, and a hotline is provided on the website to call in the event of violations. For convenience we have reprinted a short form of the DNR *Boating Laws and Responsibilities* on the DL Website ([here](#)) and the full brochure on water safety may be downloaded ([here](#)). Also the *Diamond Lake Guidelines* for recreational boating can be found ([here](#)).

Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival



From the Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival Website <https://www.birdandnaturefest.com/>

As many Diamond Lakers may know, we have a local celebration of spring here in the North Country each May, the *Chequamegon Bay Birding and Nature Festival* which celebrates its 14th year, May 14-16, 2020.

The Festival offers 3 days (Thursday-Saturday) of birding and nature activities on Wisconsin's south shore of Lake Superior at the peak of spring migration, with over 100 field trips and programs on all things nature, including birds, butterflies, wildflowers, snails, spiders, elk, frogs, fish, and mushrooms. This past year featured a theme on Extreme Weather, with associated geology-related field trips to several sites impacted by the 2016 and 2018 so-called "100 year floods."



Hwy 169 in Iron County after the July 2016 Storm. Wisconsin Emergency Management photo.

Based out of the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center located on Highway 2 just west of Ashland, trips typically involve small groups of 20 or fewer with one or two leaders who will take participants of all ages into the field, novices and those more experienced alike. The trips are sited in areas all over the Bayfield Peninsula and adjacent Bayfield and Ashland Counties. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet people with similar interests. There are also lectures and films at the Visitor Center that involve larger groups.

Spaces in some of the more popular activities fill up soon after registration opens, generally in mid-March. Watch the website and check dates to be certain.

<https://www.birdandnaturefest.com/>

Rainbow Smelt in Diamond Lake

by Raye Lahti, Board Member at Large

[*ed. note for the non-angler:* Rainbow smelt (*Osmerus mordax*) are an "exotic species" in Diamond Lake and other inland lakes here in the upper Midwest and bear no relation to rainbow trout. While adult walleye populations may possibly benefit from preying on smelt, the inverse is true for young walleye that are a favorite food of the smelt. Introduced rainbow smelt may therefore have the exact opposite result from what is desired - more and larger walleye. In recent surveys on Diamond Lake, walleye numbers have not risen, despite (expensive) efforts to introduce larger two-year-old fry that it's thought can withstand smelt predation. It's a bit of a mystery. Read on - nature is complicated.]

Background: Rainbow smelt are native to the Atlantic Coast and Lake Champlain. In rainbow smelt's native range of northeastern North America, the species is anadromous, meaning that it normally lives in marine systems, but moves into rivers to spawn. Rainbow smelt were intentionally introduced into Crystal Lake in Michigan almost a

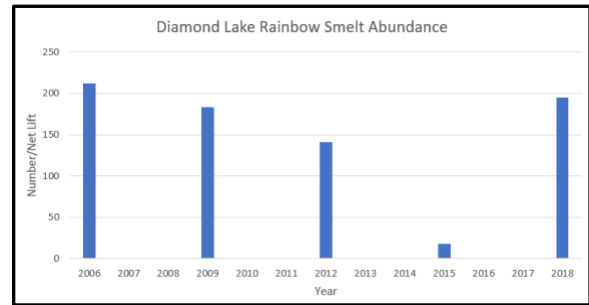
century ago, and spread through the upper Great Lakes during the 1920s and 30s. They subsequently dispersed into inland lakes, and now inhabit portions of Mississippi and Hudson Bay drainage systems.

Rainbow smelt prey upon many native game fish, including lake trout, cisco, whitefish and walleye. Numerous Wisconsin lakes have lost reproducing walleye populations following smelt infestation. They may be spreading to inland waters as a result of illegal stocking or release of live bait. Rainbow smelt thrive in clear, cool, deep lakes. Although they spend most of their time in deep water offshore, they spawn in early spring along shorelines, rivers and streams. They often school in open water in summer ([Sea Grant, Univ. of Wisconsin](#)).



Walleye (*Sander vitreus*) photo/ painting by Tim Knepp. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, public domain.

The Present: In the summer of 2018 the Wisconsin DNR placed nets in Diamond Lake with the intent of further studying the rainbow smelt population here, part of the larger fish studies that have been conducted every 3 years in recent time. In May of this year I contacted Scott Toshner, our Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Specialist, to see what the study found. He provided the bar chart below with data from 2006 up until last year. After nearly a decade of steady decline, smelt numbers increased dramatically in the last survey. More complete results should be available from the DNR in the next year.



Context: To provide some context for these results, Mr. Toshner referred us to the following excerpt from an earlier version of his report: [Fishery Survey - Diamond Lake, Bayfield County, 2003-2004](#). There he stated the following regarding rainbow smelt:

“The effect of smelt on the fishery in Diamond Lake is not [yet, 2004] clearly understood. Yellow perch recruitment declined in Crystal Lake, Vilas County, Wisconsin after the exotic rainbow smelt increased in abundance. Exploitation competition between age-0 perch and smelt may reduce the likelihood of strong year-classes of yellow perch when year classes of rainbow smelt occur. In addition, rainbow smelt may have had some effect on the extirpation of cisco from Diamond Lake. Rainbow smelt were first sampled in Diamond Lake in 1967 while the last known sampling of cisco was 1969. Rainbow smelt have had similar negative interactions with cisco/herring in other waters.

[Conversely] rainbow smelt were introduced into the Horsetooth Reservoir, Colorado to increase prey availability for [adult] walleye in 1983. Within six years of smelt being introduced walleye growth improved by 50% and zooplankton levels were reduced from 40-80 organisms/L to less than 1.0 organism/L, and a switch occurred in zooplankton species composition. The literature suggests that smelt can have significant impact on zooplankton communities and [positive] growth rates of [adult] walleye. Whether

or not these impacts or other unknown impacts are being realized on Diamond Lake has yet to be found.”

Back to the present: Mr. Toshner notes that the presence of rainbow smelt in Diamond Lake may indeed have been a factor in declining walleye survival here, confirming the idea that smelt could be significant predators in early life history stages of walleye.

But whether environmental conditions or smelt predation acted alone, or in concert, in recent walleye declines in Diamond Lake, has not yet been determined. Toshner also provided a more recent professional paper discussing the (negative) impacts of rainbow smelt on walleye in which Diamond Lake was one of 26 lakes in the study. [Mercado-Silva, et al., Impact of rainbow smelt invasion on walleye recruitment in Wisconsin lakes, Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 64: 1543–1550 \(2007\).](#)

Moving Forward: Currently, rainbow smelt are the only known exotic fish species that has been identified in Diamond Lake, and much of our shoreline still remains in a natural condition (a key to mitigating against invasives). In offering guidance about practical steps regarding invasives, the 2004 DNR report cited above states, “Preserving and enhancing the ecosystem vigilance for exotic species must continue, and shoreline restoration projects in areas that are currently lacking buffers should be explored.

Preventing the spread of exotics and enhancing habitat through restoration projects, as well as preserving the existing habitat, will be far more beneficial [emphasis added, ed.] than losing what is currently present and [then] relying on stocking and artificial habitat improvements to maintain the fishery and ecosystem as a whole.”

Scott Toshner will be the featured speaker at our annual meeting next July.



Fruits from the woods. Early September mushroom harvest in the Northcountry, collected by P. Jacobel.

Diamond Lakers Attend 2019 Northwestern Wisconsin Lakes Conference

by Dianne Klump, Board Member at Large

Each spring [Wisconsin Lakes](#) co-sponsors an all-day conference focused on the science, policy and culture of northwest Wisconsin lakes. The conference is also supported by a number of public organizations including: the lakes and rivers associations of five northwest counties (Burnett, Douglas, Bayfield, Sawyer and Washburn), the Wisconsin DNR, The University of Wisconsin Extension, the St. Croix River Association, the Polk County Land & Water Resources Department, and the Washburn County Land & Water Conservation Department.



**WISCONSIN
LAKES**

Wisconsin Lakes is a statewide non-profit working to protect the quality of Wisconsin’s 15,000 lakes. Its mission is to conserve, enhance and restore Wisconsin’s lakes to

ensure their sustainability. Individual members come from all walks of life: waterfront property owners, recreational lake users, and individuals that simply support the conservation of Wisconsin's natural resources. More than 300 lake associations and lake districts are also "institutional members," including our Diamond Lake Association.

The wide-ranging, all-day program offers educational presentations, informative exhibits and opportunities to network with fellow conference attendees. The 2019 conference (the 21st) was held at the Hayward Middle School and was attended by DL Association members Dianne Klump, Jessie Meschievitz, Ed Wallen and Tom Kraker.



The conference keynote speaker was Erica LeMoine of the Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute at Northland College who spoke about their [LoonWatch](#) program. There were more than a dozen other sessions throughout the day focused on a variety of topics, at times requiring participants to choose from among several that were ongoing in parallel. The following paragraphs describe a sampling of these sessions.

A session on current aquatic invasive species issues described information on new non-native species in Lake Superior, plus AIS management techniques and successes in Bayfield County. The session also reported on the implementation of decontamination units used throughout the county.

Many lakes are experiencing an uptick in the use of wake boats, powerboats that create a large wave for "wake surfing." The waves cause damage to shorelines and habitat as well as safety hazards. Also, the boats' large ballast tanks may transport aquatic invasive species. The talk discussed successes and failures in local ordinance development and enforcement.

[Healthy Lakes](#) is a statewide DNR initiative to improve habitat and water quality. Since 2015 the WDNR has funded 794 projects on 474 properties on 88 lakes. Pamela Toshner, WDNR Resources Lake and Watershed Protection, spoke on the initiatives to protect plant and native aquatic plant species, rain gardens and restored shorelines. We have invited Toshner and her husband, Scott Toshner, WDNR fish-biologist, to speak at the Diamond Lakers 2020 annual meeting.

[Cathy Techtmann](#), UW-Extension, took on the topic of culture and science, arguing that climate change affects what we value in our lakes and integrating scientific climate change research with place-based evidence of how climate change is affecting cultural practices. Techtmann discussed practical ideas for adapting to climate change with policies for the future.

More briefly, other sessions included: a presentation from the DNR on how citizens can work effectively with the agency to improve fisheries. A representative from the Natural Resources Conservation Service discussed how different management practices affect runoff and infiltration. A session about algae blooms caused by excessive stormwater described innovative land and in-lake practices to reduce environmental effects. A case study of how major rainstorm events have impacted a number of area lakes focused on Pigeon Lake, west of Drummond. Representatives from lake associations discussed their efforts to address these problems.

There was a presentation on groundwater hydrology in Wisconsin: where it comes from where it goes, and how the path it takes determines the quality and quantity of water in Wisconsin lakes. A session was led by Wisconsin's Green Fire, a newly formed, non-partisan organization of citizens and natural resources professionals who promote science in decision-making about fire. The Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership which includes eight states working together to protect, rehabilitate and enhance sustainable fish habitats in glacial Midwest lakes described their efforts. More details from the conference brochure may be downloaded [here](#).

The Diamond Lake Association encourages members to attend the conference next year or in the future. Anyone interested should contact Frosty Palmer.

Winter Propane Discounts for DL Members



As noted in the e-mail message sent earlier this summer, Diamond Lake members now have the option of two winter propane discount offers, but need to act quickly if you have not already done so.

Option 1 Midland Propane: For those owning their own tank or renting a tank from Midland, our winter price for 2019-20 will be \$1.129. If you wish to change suppliers from your current company over to Midland, there may be a one-time changover fee (ranging from \$0 up to \$75) to drain your current tank and pump the gas into a Midland tank.

To take advantage of this option call Frosty or send him an e-mail (icemannusa1@msn.com) and let him know you want to be included in the group buy. When you contact Midland about arranging your contract, be sure to let them know that you are part of the Lake Namakagon – Diamond Lake Association group buy.

Option 2 Como/ Thompson Propane: For those who already buy propane from Como (or want to switch to them), our winter price will be \$1.199 (7 cents more than the above). Just let them know you are a member of the DL Association when you arrange your winter contract. I would recommend that you do this at the [Cable Office](#) (ask for Chris) as they know the arrangement and have our current paid membership list.

Both of these options offer considerable savings from the “street price” for 2019-20, perhaps between \$100 - \$200, depending on how much you use. An excellent return on membership.

Diamond Lakers Annual Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2019

---Intro/opening remarks: Frosty

---New members introduction:

Ray & Kathleen Lorenz, 2018

Dave & Trina James, 2019

Thomas and Lynne McNutt, 2019

(in absentia) Maureen Chapin and David Biesecker, 2019

---Approval of 07/2018 meeting minutes: So moved by Juels Carlson, seconded by Todd Stivland.

---Treasurer's Report, Bob Jacobel: Current balance is \$4,680.75. A review of budget receipts and expense both incurred and anticipated, shows that they will very nearly balance this year. This will not be the case in the future w/o some action (see discussion below).

---Lake water quality report by Ed Wallen: We are half-way through annual lake monitoring (four sessions per year). Lake quality is excellent: 2.2 µg/L chlorophyll in Diamond vs 16.1 µg/L average for our area. D. Lake is categorized as "mesotrophic" (just as desired).

---Fishing/wild life report: Various members volunteered information, including small-mouth, walleye and northern pike recent catch & releases, bear sightings near the dam. One juvenile eagle appears to be in the nest on the SE shore. Loon pair has been sitting on the nest since June 10th but so far no success despite three attempts.

---Old business: (none to discuss)

---AIS boat landing camera update, Bob Jacobel: System is working well now, though needs a few tweaks. Wi-fi connection is sometimes "marginal." Overall, it is greatly improved from last year due to the upgrades installed recently. The speaker is currently being repaired.

---Discussion of hybrid milfoil that is currently present in Lake Namakagon and options to cover increased annual expenses relating to boat launch monitoring. Bob anticipates approx. \$700/year budget shortfall starting in 2020 that would gradually begin to erode our reserves. This led to an extended discussion/ consideration of ways to increase income, including a separate AIS fund based on donations, a two-level dues system, and increasing regular Diamond Lakers dues to \$50/yr. A motion for the latter was made by Lynne McNutt and seconded by Mark Collins and then **approved in a unanimous vote**.

Also, the question was raised about a possible cleaning station at the boat launch. Significant problems related to providing power, equipment security and the lack of safety from traffic at the launch site mean that it would need to be located elsewhere or users advised of other off-site locations—board will discuss further.

---Nominating Committee report, Dianne Klump: The terms for Raye Lahti & Sarah Stivland (Board Members At Large), Bob Jacobel (Treasurer) & Ed Wallen (Vice President) expire this year. All volunteered to stand for election and continue for another term. Motion made by Monica Wallen/seconded by Ruth Lauritzen to reelect the four incumbents. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

---LP Winter Gas update: Diamond Lakers special price from Midland is \$1.129/gallon for prepaid gallons ordered now. Also, Dianne Klump and Bob Jacobel approached Como and they have offered DL members a special rate of \$1.199 with no advance payment. Members need to make arrangements asap, as per e-mail from Bob.

---4th of July boat parade: Best in show this year was the “mermaid crew/Kraker family.” Sally Carlson suggested using a retired canoe paddle as a rotating trophy in the future. The idea was met with widespread approval. The parade was followed by a barbecue hosted by the Carlson family. All thanks to the Carlsons for the well-attended, delightful event. The 2020 boat parade date will be Friday, July 3rd.

---Ed Wallen introduced Angelina Sikora, manager of Tommy Thompson fish hatchery in Spooner. Diamond Lake has been and will be a recipient of their walleye fingerlings. Angelina discussed their process and stated that the stocking of Diamond began by them in 1972. The years 1996-2006 were “small fingerlings” and since 2007 it has been “large fingerlings.” Angelina explained how the hatchery farms their fish and stated that they have 46 separate ponds, each approx. 1 acre in size. Tommy Thompson fish hatchery is the largest Musky producer in the United States. They realize a success rate of approx. 60-70% vs. only .01% success rate in nature. The hatchery offers tours to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays b/w 10 & 2.

---Final item: We all sang happy birthday to Chuck & Ellie Raths—both are turning 85 this year (August & November).

Submitted by: Tracy Veillette (acting secretary for Michelle Veillette)