

***The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership &
Water Action Volunteers
Present***

2019

Wisconsin Lake
Stewardship &

Volunteer Stream Monitoring
Awards

**Wisconsin Lake Stewardship &
Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards
Banquet**

**Wisconsin Lakes Partnership Convention &
Water Action Volunteers Symposium
April 11, 2019**

For the first time ever, the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership and Water Action Volunteers present their separate annual awards in one presentation! As all waters are one, tonight we jointly recognize our lake and stream champions!



Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards

The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership presents the Lake Stewardship Awards each year in celebration of the extraordinary volunteer and professional efforts made to protect and improve lakes in Wisconsin. The Stewardship Awards represent our best collective effort to honor and celebrate all the incredible work that goes into ensuring the future of our state's legacy of lakes.



Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards

Since 2002, the University of Wisconsin-Extension and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources have recognized exemplary work in volunteer stream monitoring in Wisconsin through the annual awards program.

Individuals and groups are recognized for their efforts leading to increased participation in stream monitoring, collecting stream data, and sharing their knowledge of stream monitoring.

The Wisconsin Lake Partnership & Water Action Volunteers thank the Sponsors of the WI Lakes Partnership Convention & Water Action Volunteers Symposium. Their donations help defray the costs for the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship & Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards Banquet and Wednesday evening's Welcome Reception.



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2019 WI Lake Stewardship Award Nominees

New nominees this year and those from the previous two years are considered in each category. New nominees for 2019 are listed below in **bold**.

Citizen

Rollie Alger
Jon Blume
Carol Elvery
Candy Ramsay
Michael Backus
Nate & Jessica Rice
Tom Schroeder
Michael Backus

Public Service

Heather Palmquist & Zach Wilson (Iron County LCD)
Sandy Wickman

Group

Black Oak Lake Preservation Foundation
Beaver Dam Lake Management District (Barron Cty)
Manitowoc County Lakes Association
North Lakeland Discovery Center
Clean Lakes Alliance

Youth/Educator

Communities at Oshkosh North, Fall of 2017

Business

No nominees for 2019

2019 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award Winners

Nate & Jessica Rice ~ Citizen

Nate and Jessica Rice are emblematic of the best sort of citizen volunteers for our lakes. Passionate leaders dedicated to the cause, their impact on Silver Lake in Waukesha County, as well as waters in their region, is impressive. On Silver Lake they've led a massive Clean Boats Clean Waters effort, including the hiring of Summit police officers to help monitor the landing. Nate himself discovered a questionable plant on one boat trailer that turned out to be Starry Stonewort, a new invader to Wisconsin. But their work doesn't just involve their own lake, as they've consulted with other area lakes on CBCW and CLMN programs, participated in county and regional planning and educational events, and been involved on a state level with the WI Lakes Partnership. As former AIS coordinator for Waukesha and Washington Counties, Bradley Stekart says of the Rice's, "their passion for the health of water in Waukesha County's 'Lake Country' is a true example of heeding the call of our Wisconsin waters."

North Lakeland Discovery Center ~ Group (Multiple Lakes/ Regional)

It would be nearly impossible to list here all that North Lakeland Discovery Center does for water quality and aquatic invasive species prevention and control in Vilas County. From administering multiple grants and programs, including lake management and planning and Clean Boats Clean Waters efforts on multiple lakes, to sponsoring a Healthy Lakes shoreland restoration grant program, to providing educational programs throughout the year, the Discovery Center continues to serve as, in the words of the chair of the Winchester Town Lakes Committee, "a pinnacle resource in Vilas County for AIS education and management." The Discovery Center coordinates AIS monitoring on 25 county lakes, administers hand-pulling and purple loosestrife control projects and even partners with UW's Trout Lake Station on a lake level monitoring project for 40 lakes, one of the biggest in the state.

Beaver Dam Lake Management District ~ Group (Single Lake)

Beaver Dam Lake Management District is a successful participant in many of the activities led by lake groups across the state, including dealing with aquatic invasive species, restoring lake habitat, fish-stocking, and generally working to protect their lake. But the District's efforts to restore a bay of the lake, known as Library Lake, sets them apart. Working with the DNR, Barron County, City of Cumberland, and others, the District was instrumental in disconnecting city stormwater flows into the lake to limit pollution, restoring and beautifying shoreline areas and habitat, and restoring navigational capability into Library Lake, giving boaters access to downtown Cumberland. According to DNR Lake Biologist Alex Smith, the District's accomplishments "ensure that people can enjoy the natural beauty surrounding Beaver Dam Lake today and into the future."

2019 Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award Winners

Communities at Oshkosh North, Fall of 2017 ~ Youth/Educator

The Communities project of Oshkosh North High School aims to help students learn content through real-life application, pairing with local businesses and partners to help solve community problems. In the fall of 2017 and with the support of the Oshkosh Rotary, the class embarked on a “Water Hero” project with the dual goals of educating Oshkosh elementary school students and the larger community about the city’s stormwater management system and to place medallions with environmental messages on city storm drains. The class developed a curriculum to present to the elementary schools and designed and placed the medallions on and near storm drains in areas where it was deemed they would be most visible. The students also launched a public relations campaign, garnering significant local media attention for the project. In the end it is estimated that their efforts reached an audience of over 30,000 in the Oshkosh area.

Sandy Wickman ~ Public Service

One supporter of Sandy Wickman receiving the Public Service award speaks for many in describing her “amazingly inspirational support.” For almost 25 years, Sandy has been meeting citizens, organizing trainings, and giving out advice on citizen lake monitoring as a Water Resource Management Specialist with DNR and Citizen Lake Monitoring Network Regional Coordinator with UW-Extension. Though loathe to seek the limelight, she’s willing to give presentations and media interviews, and was instrumental in the update to *Through the Looking Glass*, the well-known book on aquatic plants. Sandy is known and loved throughout northern Wisconsin, overseeing more than 500 lake volunteers. Her nominator for this award, Susan Knight of UW’s Trout Lake station says, “No matter what lake group I talk to, EVERYONE has already met Sandy, and says so with a smile on their face. Her delightful personality, gentle ways and vast knowledge of lakes makes her especially effective, and most deserving of this award.”



2018 Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award Winners

Bob & Linda Merline ~ Adult Volunteers

Bob and Linda Merline have been instrumental in the monitoring efforts in the Fish Creek Watershed for more than 18 years! Linda, now leading the volunteer team, organizes site visits, regularly trains and communicates with volunteers, and meticulously prepares the data sheets. Bob's role, just as crucial as Linda's, focuses more on maintaining, calibrating, and testing the equipment that will be provided to the volunteers. Anthony Fiorato, a volunteer in the Fish Creek Watershed Program, expressed his appreciation of the Merline's efforts stating that the monitoring program organized by Linda and Bob is "truly impressive" and "represents the best practices for field testing and data collection." Linda is also active in seeking grant funds and support for Fish Creek Watershed studies and projects. In 2016 Fish Creek Watershed stream monitoring and Bob and Linda's efforts were highlighted in a report prepared for the Town of Gibraltar Annual Meeting, bringing attention to the water quality of the creek and the health of the watershed. Linda and Bob also responded to a Shedd Aquarium call for volunteers to monitor sucker migration in Fish Creek, which included daily observations.

Bob Sampson ~ Employee

As an employee of Grande Cheese in Juda, Wisconsin, Bob learned about stream monitoring at a Grande-sponsored training in 2012. Since that time, Bob has been involved in stream monitoring through his role at Grande and as a member and volunteer Director of the Lower Sugar River Watershed Association. Not only has he monitored four different sites for five years in the Juda Branch, but he has also supported other teams of monitors and entered information into the data base. One critical aspect that allows ongoing monitoring to continue improving these watersheds is having other volunteers interested in water monitoring. Bob works with his fellow monitors to help them to identify sites that personally interest them and works with DNR biologists to find sites that need the most attention. His never-ending passion for creating and keeping a healthy watershed is also evident when he engages in community outreach including student tours and presentations at events and meetings. Patrick Cardiff, Director of Manufacturing at Grande Cheese stated, "Bob exemplifies how an employee of a company should interact and support the community to help improve our natural resources."

Green Lake Watershed WAV ~ Rookie

Stephanie Prellwitz, Executive Director of the Green Lake Association, in pointing out the need for data from the area upstream of the lake, said, "Citizen scientists are now playing a critical role in filling that gap and the data has already helped with our lake management efforts." Thanks to the vision of initial coordinators, Eric Godfrey and Tom Wagner, the Green Lake Watershed WAV monitoring effort has grown to 19 volunteers and 14 monitoring stations covering every single tributary of Big Green Lake in just their first season of monitoring! Tom and Eric were both collecting data on tributary streams to Big Green Lake as part of a larger Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited monitoring group, but it was when they started developing the idea of monitoring ALL the streams flowing into Big Green Lake in an organized and consistent manner that momentum began to build and Green Lake Watershed WAV took shape. The coordinated effort also benefited from Kat Griffith and Jesse Schwingle of Lumen Charter School, who had been involved in monitoring for the past 5 years. Kicking things off in the spring of 2018, informational meetings were held to inform the community of the monitoring opportunities and volunteers were recruited and trained, resulting in successful data collection and reporting. Outreach to community and youth is an essential component of the Green Lake Watershed WAV monitoring as they educate others about maintaining a healthy watershed and lake for generations to come.

2018 Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Award Winners

UW-Whitewater Sustainability Office Student Volunteers ~ Group

A positive aspect of the Water Action Volunteers program being on a college campus, is that it can motivate and involve students of all majors, and even give insight into potential careers for those students. The UW-Whitewater Sustainability Office Student Volunteers are a perfect example of this opportunity. With stream monitoring sites located near the campus, Wesley Enterline, Sustainability Office Coordinator, has provided countless opportunities for students to be involved in monitoring three streams since 2013. In 2018, students Max Grueneberg and John Roberts became trained themselves and then lead three volunteer sessions a month from April through October, introducing 30 new students to stream monitoring. Max noted that not only was their goal to teach volunteers to monitor the stream, but also to “realize the importance of their work.” The UW-Whitewater’s student participation in stream monitoring is not only a learning opportunity for them and a benefit to the water resources, but they are also engaging with the community through field trips and summer camps for Whitewater Middle School students.

In Memory of Ron Martin ~ Pioneer

The Volunteer Stream Monitoring “Pioneer” award has been given just three times since the inception of the awards program in 2002. It is truly reserved for those who have made deep and lasting contributions to volunteer monitoring and stream stewardship, as did Ron Martin.

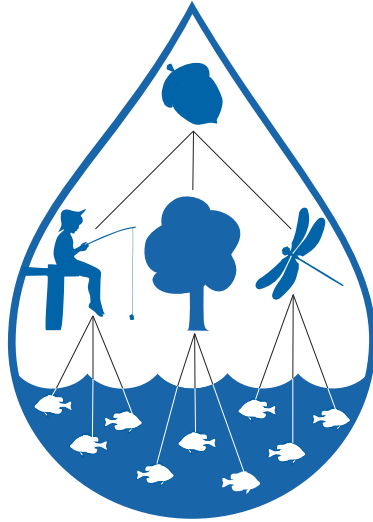
Ron learned to care for the environment from his parents. These lessons guided him in both his personal and his professional life and he passed those lessons down to sons Andy and Dan. They say that the best way to honor their dad’s memory is to “enjoy this wonderful world responsibly and sustainably.”

Ron loved the Lodi Marsh and Spring Creek, his home of many years. He hiked the Ice Age Trail loop in the marsh daily, sometimes twice a day, until he could no longer walk. The marsh sustained him, physically and spiritually.

Ron’s distinguished career with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Dane County Office of Lakes and Watersheds, as well as his efforts as a volunteer through the Friends of the Scenic Lodi Valley, shows the passion he had for this field of work. His monitoring efforts were limitless, including monitoring in Lake Wisconsin that was useful in the development of the Wisconsin River TMDL, collecting data to support the Spring Creek Watershed Survey, using DNR protocols and methods to collect samples for water chemistry, calibrating and collecting data using meters, and collecting macroinvertebrate samples. Former DNR colleague, Dave Marshall, spoke for everyone when he said, “Ron demonstrated his lifelong passion for conservation in many ways over the years and he is sorely missed. His contributions as both a Water Resources Manager professional and volunteer will not be forgotten.”



Photo by Stephen Gassman



Pay it Forward

**2019 Wisconsin Lakes Convention and
Water Action Volunteers Symposium**

The Wisconsin Lakes Partnership

Since its genesis in the early 1970's, the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership has been recognized as a national model of collaboration, bringing science, education, and citizens together to empower people to work together to care for our lakes. The core partners of the Partnership are:

- Wisconsin Lakes (Citizens)
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (Government)
- UW-Extension Lakes Program (Academics)



Water Action Volunteers

Water Action Volunteers (WAV) is a statewide network of over 600 citizen scientists who are learning about water quality and aquatic life in their local streams while collecting valuable data to inform stream management decisions. The program is coordinated through a partnership between the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension. <http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/wav/index.html>

