

A Long-Time Advocate for Pine and Cedar Lakes Retires

When Jerry Janish became a board director of Morrison County's Pine-Cedar Lakes Association its main focus was on organizing an annual meeting, publishing a directory and participating in the "Healthy Lakes" program. That was 20 years ago.

The Janesville, MN, resident, who recently retired from the board, served for seven years as a director, seven more as secretary and the past six as president. And during that time the organization's focus shifted and intensified.

"In mid 2000s we started to do water quality testing, and now have about 15 years of data," he said. "In the last five years we began to do vegetation surveys on Pine and Cedar to track curly leaf pondweed, and continue to monitor for zebra mussels as well."



Jerry Janish saw numerous changes occur during his 20 years on the Pine-Cedar Lakes Association board of directors.

While Janish credits the board members and volunteers who eagerly step in to help with the hands-on work involved in monitoring invasive species, he also is quick to point out that, compared to some, the lake association is relatively small. Even with the most determined volunteers, it couldn't have accomplished much without help at the county level.

“Pine Lake is roughly 180 acres in size and Cedar about 230,” he said, “and there are fewer than 100 properties on the lakes combined. So, without the grants from Morrison County, all this would have been impossible.”

Initially, Janish explained, the association used grant funds to put the water-quality testing program in place. Then applied for funds to conduct vegetation surveys. Likewise, grant money was used to construct zebra mussel settling plates, used to determine if adult mussels are present in the lakes, and again to purchase tow nets to check for veliger (immature) zebra mussels as well as spiny water fleas.



Board member Gary Roerick and his son Tom survey the lake for veligers, the latest program undertaken by the lake association.

“We have six settling plates on each lake that volunteers check monthly for zebra mussels., “he said, “plus tow nets they use to check for veligers (immature zebra mussels).”

In late June, volunteers collect samples from multiple spots in each lake. “Then we take the samples to the county, which sends them to the lab for analysis,” said Janish.

Pine and Cedar lakes have a hard substrate, which zebra mussels like, plus they are located near other waters where the mussels have been detected. Both factors qualify them for special attention when it comes to the invasive mollusks, but the lake association is what moves things forward, according to Galen Gruber, Morrison County AIS Technician.

“It’s the volunteers who make things happen,” he said. “Without them, we wouldn’t have a program here. I can help work through options and details, but it’s a positive thing when a lake association reaches out with their own initiatives and ideas. And I appreciate the hard work Jerry did coming up with a series of programs that use the grant money as it was intended.”

To date, all the testing results show that neither Pine Lake nor Cedar Lake harbor zebra mussels or spiny water fleas. Monitoring will continue on. And though Jerry Janish may have retired from his official role on the board, he remains an active volunteer as a member of the association.

This information is produced and distributed by the Mississippi Headwaters Board in an effort to motivate everyone to protect our natural resources. A recreation based lifestyle is part of our MN Traditions and is only preserved when we protect our aquatic resources from invaders such as zebra mussels and Eurasian milfoil. To support Minnesota Traditions join us on social media here:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MNTraditions>

FaceBook: <https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaTraditions/>

Website: www.minnesotatraditions.com for more information

