

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2012 A Really Good Year, But...

The 2012 summer season was a great success, after experiencing one of our worst summers last year in our effort to control Eurasian Water Milfoil (EWM) in the Tomahawk Lake Watershed. You will read elsewhere in this newsletter that, as a result of perfect environmental conditions, May's **chemical treatment was very successful** in reducing or eliminating a great many acres of EWM. If you spent much time out on the water this summer, I'm sure you realized that many of the large and dense EWM beds of 2011 had disappeared. Even areas where we historically have struggled were positively affected by the treatment. As we ended the 2012 season, we made significant headway in controlling EWM.

Our Hydraulic Conveyor team continued to work diligently on removing new small areas of EWM before they gained a foothold on the lake bed. Their results showed a couple of interesting trends. First, the size and number of new areas of infestation are getting smaller as time goes on. We didn't find many "surprise" beds this summer, and this is a good thing. In past years we have found previously undiscovered patches of immature EWM emerging in the late summer. Not so much this year. Secondly, we have noticed that in places where we have found new EWM growth, the beds have been much more mixed with native plants, and the EWM hasn't seemed nearly as dense as in the past. Does this mean that the natives are competing better, or that the EWM isn't as "invasive" as in past experience? Somehow I doubt it, but it certainly bears watching.

Our **Sentinels Teams** completed two surveys over the course of the summer that demonstrated an overall reduction in the spread of EWM. Both surveys – one in June and one in August – were consistent in their findings, which showed fewer sites where EWM is infesting the lake. Thanks to these folks for their good work, and to Roger

Substantial Progress Made With EWM Control Efforts

After last year's challenge with EWM treatments, this year's results show substantial progress.

This summer, the TLA chemically treated 57 polygons (see sidebar What is a Polygon?) covering 124.75 acres of heavy EWM infestation. This was three times what we have ever found in any previous year.

Our 2012 results indicate an 80% success rate within the 57 polygons!

The total 2012 post-treatment inventory included 338 bottom samples: 237 from this year's treated polygons and 101 from areas that weren't treated this year, but have been treated in the past. Of the total number of samples taken, Ned Greedy, TLA Executive Director, only found 80 samples which contained EWM plants. More than 76% of all samples taken were EWM free.

Of the 237 samples gathered from this year's treatment polygons, no residual EWM was found in 190 of them. Of the 49 bottom samples that did

What is a polygon?

When an area of EWM infestation is discovered, its acreage and density is mapped. Each area that is mapped is called a polygon. The number and location of polygons, their size and their shape is determined by the surveyor in a survey taken each fall. The polygon map is the blueprint for the chemical application to be made the following spring.

(Continued on page 2)

Tomahawk Lake Real Estate Update Single Family Home Sales Remain Steady; Condominium Sales Sluggish

By Adam Redman, new TLA director and Broker/Owner, Redman Realty Group, LLC Similar to the general trends of Oneida and Vilas Counties, property values on Tomahawk Lake are experiencing a median sale price substantially lower than the median asking prices. The current values are still down approximately 20-25 percent from 2005-2007 values. On other lakes in the northwoods, the current values are at times down 30-40 percent from 2005-2007 prices.

However, there is always a high demand for Tomahawk Lake properties. Because of the relatively low inventory—and as long as sellers are realistic in their pricing —there is a high likelihood of selling, even in the tough marketplace for lakefront homes. (Continued on page 3)

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(Continued from page 1)

Cote, our Sentinels coordinator, for leading the effort.

Our Clean Boats Clean Waters effort

at the Thoroughfare landing and at the Lake Tomahawk Town Landing was again a great success. While we are still feeding data into the state Clean Boats Clean Waters website, it certainly appears that thousands of visitors to our lake over the course of the summer received a great deal of positive information about how they can make a difference in the fight against Aquatic Invasive Species. Two things stuck out to our ramp attendants. First, virtually every boater coming into our watershed was aware of the Aquatic Invasive Species transport laws, and second, almost no one came into our lake with weeds attached to their boats, motors or trailers. During the weekends, it appears that we were "Weed Free" at our two major ramps.

One area of major concern to our Clean Boats Clean Waters (CBCW) program however is that – with a very few notable exceptions – our volunteer efforts at protecting our watershed at the boat ramps is nil.

Our only consistent volunteer was Tom Haupt. Tom magically appeared at the Lake Tomahawk Town Ramp virtually every Saturday morning this summer (He has done this for several years). His efforts have paid huge dividends to all the shoreline owners of Tomahawk Lake. Oh, and did I mention that Tom is Eighty Something! A Big Thank You goes out to Tom Haupt!

Finally, you will be happy to know that 2012 was the year we began an **"Extended Growth" Walleye stocking program** in Tomahawk Lake. In September, at TLA's request, the DNR placed 17,000 7.5–8.0 inch Walleye fingerlings into the lake. These fingerlings are past the size where Bass and specifically Cisco will prey upon them. We will hopefully follow this stocking up in two years with a second batch of extended growth fish, and over time, bring our Walleye fishery back.

This year will go down as a very good year for TLA. So, you might ask, "What is the hang-up?" Well here it is:

Good years are usually followed by not so good years. Our progress in the good years is due to things that we can control, and our progress in the bad years is usually due to the things that we cannot control.

At the end of a good year I always wonder what the next spring will bring. Will the ice go out early and allow the lake waters to warm earlier in the spring (a good thing)? Will we hit the nail on the head in terms of making our chemical application at just the right point in time? Will the chemicals we use eradicate the EWM, but leave the Native Plants unscathed? More and more, TLA is learning to control many of these things. As time goes on, we hope to take as many variables out of the "success equation" as we can.

Sitting here in November, my question is: "Will we increase our organization's membership in 2013 enough to ensure initiatives can go forward in a sustainable way?" We continue to need everyone's efforts to make this happen. Every lake shore owner has a stake in TLA's efforts to protect and enhance Tomahawk Lake, and yet every lake shore owner is not a member of our organization. We made great strides to get more property owners involved in 2012, but we've got a ways to go.

I hope that 2013 will be the year when we can have the kind of success in growing our membership that we have had in 2012, making progress in controlling Aquatic Invasive Species in Tomahawk Lake.

Ned

Ned Greedy Executive Director Tomahawk Lake Association, Inc..

EWM Control Efforts

(Continued from page 1)

contain EWM plants, 45 contained only a minimal amount of EWM. <u>This is a tremendous success!</u>

LOOKING BACK TO 2011

The season ending survey told us that our chemical treatment did not yield much progress. You may recall that the spring of 2011 was among the coldest on record. The ice in Tomahawk Lake didn't go out until the first week in May and the cold persisted into early July. As a result, EWM plant development was extremely slow and, even though we were allowed to delay our chemical treatment until June 9th, the EWM plants were not yet blooming when the chemical was applied. There were several additional issues which negatively affected the success of the 2011 chemical treatment, but suffice it to say that little EWM was killed.

The second half of the 2011 summer season then saw absolutely perfect growing conditions for EWM. Warm days and warm nights, lots of sunlight, and a long and warm fall provided the EWM plants with optimal growing conditions, and it took full advantage of them.

WE HAVEN'T WON THE WAR

While this year's results are wonderful news, it doesn't mean that we have won the war. If we were to have another extremely late spring as we did in 2011, all of these gains could be wiped away in one growing season. To be sure, the number of acres to be treated next year will be down substantially. However, to keep Tomahawk Lake beautiful long term, we must be diligent in finding and treating every area where EWM appears.

Eurasion Water Milfoil



EWM reproduces by fragmentation.

Avoid EWM weed beds. Keep your boat clean and prevent the spread of EWM.

Lake Real Estate Update (Continued from page 1)

Active and sold data from 2012:

There are currently <u>12 homes for sale</u> on Tomahawk Lake with an average asking price of \$689,266 and a median price of \$695,000. Asking prices range from a low of \$179,900 to a high of \$1,950,000.

- Ten homes have sold YTD on Tomahawk Lake from a low of \$133,000 to a high of \$2,450,000.
- Average original asking price of \$596,030
- Average asking price upon receiving an offer: \$580,630
- Average sale price: \$537,740
- Median asking price of \$389,900
- Median sale price: \$342,500

There are currently <u>four single family vacant</u> <u>parcels</u> for sale on Tomahawk with an average asking price of \$609,725 and a median price of \$675,000.

• One vacant land sale YTD with an asking price of \$450,000 and a sale price of \$330,000.

There are currently <u>17 condominiums</u> for sale with an average asking price of \$360,258 and a median price of \$300,000. Asking prices currently range from \$65,000 to \$725,000.

• One condo sale YTD with an asking price of

ENGAGE,

EDUCATE &

CONNECT

IN 2013

\$129,500 and a sale price of \$125,000.

Thanks to Members, Donors & Volunteers... Fair Share Campaign achieved financial goal, missed participation goal

In its second year, the Fair Share campaign surpassed its financial goal, but did not meet its participation goal. Thank you to everyone who participated in the Fair Share campaign!

As of October 2, the TLA has raised \$76,198 – 101% percent of our goal. A total of 222 families have donated an average of \$343 per family. Our 2012 goal was to raise \$75,000 by encouraging 280 lake property owners (80% of owners) to donate \$270.

While we met our financial goal, we need to get more momentum behind our participation goal. To be sustainable long term – and to keep the individual *Fair Share* amount below \$300 –we must get more participation through our neighborhoods on Tomahawk Lake.

It is imperative that the majority of families on the lake participate in its care...every year. <u>Aquatic Invasive</u> <u>Species like EWM are problems that</u> <u>don't go away and that no one will</u> <u>take care of for us.</u>

By establishing ourselves as a well organized community of engaged, educated and connected citizens, we have the best chance of protecting our lake. Only by banding together, will we ensure a

sustainable effort to manage the challenges that come to our watershed.

For 2013, we ask everyone on the lake to **Engage**, **Educate & Connect**.

Engage

• Please include your *Fair Share* contribution in your 2013 budget. Also consider volunteering your time.

• The TLA has a new volunteer program. Lake enthusiasts are now welcome to donate volunteer time as their *Fair Share* contribution. Anyone who is able to contribute a minimum of 20 hours of volunteer time will meet their *Fair Share* goal. Please contact Ned Greedy if you are interested in helping the lake with your time!

Educate & Connect

• Please educate and connect family, friends and neighbors to help them understand how important it is that we all join the effort to keep Tomahawk Lake beautiful—with dollars or time.

Please help add even more strength to our numbers by getting more people involved!



TLA Remembers David Brock

This past month, TLA lost a friend, board member and avid supporter when David Brock passed away in a single engine plane crash.

David was passionate about the outdoors and Tomahawk Lake in particular. When he and his wife Noelle purchased their home on the lake in 2009, they almost immediately got engaged with TLA. David saw the value of a well-organized citizen effort to address the needs of the lake, and was always willing to lend a hand. He was the first to volunteer for our many activities, including lining up speakers for our education efforts and helping grill brats at our annual picnic. He understood the balance required to both aggressively treat the invasive species within the lake, while maintaining a connection to lake residents and the local townships.

His sage advice will be greatly missed by all that knew him but we can all keep his passion and spirit alive by continuing to make sure we never lose sight of the importance of maintaining Tomahawk Lake for generations to come.



Tomahawk Lake Restocked with Nearly 17,000 Walleye

The WDNR restocked Tomahawk Lake with 16,954 walleye on September 10 and 11. The average length of the fish was between 7.7 and 8 in. – large enough to deter Bass and specifically Cisco from preying upon them. Fisheries Biologist John Kubisiak was in Woodruff when fish were being harvested and took these photos to share with us.





We will hopefully follow this stocking up in two years with a second batch of extended growth fish working to bring our Walleye fishery back.

Special thanks to the WDNR for getting such large fish to restock Tomahawk Lake!

Mark Your 2013 Calendar:

NEW Social Event to meet your neighbors and raise funds!

The TLA is excited to announce a new social event for 2013: Wine Tasting & Silent Auction on Sunday, May 26th from 4 – 7 p.m. at the Oppenheim residence. This activity will take the place of the Annual Picnic and Lake Fair.

This will be a great way to get to know more of your lake neighbors – thanks to Al and Margo for opening their door to the neighborhood. While

this is a social activity, we wouldn't mind raising a little money for the TLA as well. Capacity for the event is limited

Wine Tasting & Silent Auction Sunday, May 26 4 – 7 p.m. at the Oppenheim's

to 100 people. Tickets will go on sale January 1.

Auction Items Needed

We are looking for 5-10 big ticket items to be donated for the silent auction with a minimum value of \$500. Please contact Kris Hunt at KrisHunt52@gmail.com if you have an item to donate. (We already have a donation of 2-4 Packer Tickets at a value of \$280/ticket!)

Please also consider volunteering...

or our *Clean Boats Clean Waters activities* or to participate in the *July 4th parades* in Lake Tomahawk and Minocqua. Both are activities you can do with your teenage children or grandchildren. For more information, email Ned Greedy at edgreedy@gmail.com.

The 2013 Board Meetings of the TLA will take place:

November 10, 9:00 a.m. January 19, 9:00 a.m. March 16, 9:00 a.m. May 11, 8:30 a.m. June 15, 8:30 a.m. July 13, 8:30 a.m. August 17, 8:30 a.m.

Annual Meeting September 14, 8:30 a.m. Election of officers and board of directors

Board meetings are open to all TLA members. Locations are to be determined. Email Margo at mmoppy@deerrunstone.com for details.

Does your pier need a permit?

By Louis Molepske, TLA director and State Representative for the 71st Assembly District

While piers are a key part of our waterfront enjoyment and recreation, it's also a subject that can require some knowledge of the laws if you are considering altering or adding to your pier structure.



Wisconsin pier laws do not regulate the number of pier dock or wharf structures that you can place on your property. However, Wisconsin pier laws do regulate the size of the structure (e.g., width) and how you use the structure (e.g., boat slips/berths). In addition, there may be local ordinances that restrict the number of structures placed on your property either directly or indirectly by requiring side setbacks with structure placement.

For your reference I have put together a summary of the current law related to piers and structures near or in the water or littoral* zone.

To quickly determine if your pier needs a permit or to learn more about the laws, visit: www.tomahawklake.org

*of or pertaining to the shore of a lake, sea, or ocean.



Thank You to 2012 Donors



Over Fair Share

Alexander Rev. Trust Andersen, James Anderson, Tom & Pam Baines, Jim & Cathy Beach, Tom & Martha Beech, Tom & Carol Benjamin, Ralph & Diane Bergman, Donald Boles, Sarah Bortner, Dave Bortner, Rebecca & C. Oberle Brock. David & Noelle Broomell, Dare & Mary Buchheit, Charles & Susan Clearwater Camp Foundation Combs III, Earle & Virginia Converse, Arlan & Marilyn Coriell, Gene & Chris Cote, Roger & Fran Dalton, Daniel & Shelia Daly, Pat & Kathy Dodge, Marv Donner, Keith & Gail Egen, James & Mary Elliott, Craig Faulks, Robert & Christine Ferguson, Jim & Sue Fisher, Russell & Chris Foster, Race & Lynne Fox Den Family Ltd Partnership Gauchel, Peter & Brenda Gauerke, Scott & Pam Gazeley, Harold & Janis Gerstner. Jeff & Dian Goltermann Jr., Louis Greenleaf, Sally Guenther, Lee & Janet Harmsen, Scott & Tammy Hartwig, John & Mary Hoellerich, Daniel & Lynn Hoerr, Edward & Judy Hoppe, Lee & Sunday Hunt, Jon & Kris Hurckes, Richard & Lou Igoe Jr., Michael Janssen, Donald & Greta

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Africano, Randy & Diane Andersen, Randy & Kathy Bateman, Bill & Marsha

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Friends of the lake

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MEET YOUR 2013 TLA BOARD Two New Directors Join the Board for 2013...

Adam Redman and Returning Director Jim Kavemeier

Paul Shain, President

paul@badgernorth.com



Paul and his wife Suzy have had a home on Tomahawk Lake for seven years and he has been involved with the Association

since 2007. When not up north, they live in Madison where Paul is the CEO of Singlewire Software and is involved in many activities associated with the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Margo Oppenheim, Secretary

mmoppy@deerrunstone.com



Margo has lived on Tomahawk Lake for 60 years. Her parents, Ruth and Harrison Klippel, established

Klippel's Landing (currently Lakeside Grill) in 1946. Margo also has served on the Minocqua Town Planning Commission for the past five years. She and her husband Alan own and operate Deer Run Stone on Hwy. 51 South, a wholesale distributorship and retail sale of natural and man-made stone products used for building materials, (fireplaces interior & exterior walls) landscape and flooring products. They have one daughter Lindsey who was recently married to David Maki. Margo's love and passion for Tomahawk Lake has rubbed off on her family and they all enjoy year round living on the "Jewel of the North."

Scott Harmsen, Treasurer

scott.harmsen@gt.com



Scott and his wife Tammy, along with their three teenage children Jenna, Alyssa and Jacob, and two Labradors, have been summer residents of the Pottawattomie Colony

on Tomahawk Lake since 2004. Prior to that, they enjoyed fifteen wonderful summers on Kawaguesaga Lake with Scott's parents and sister. Tammy was born and raised in Minocqua which permits him to say "I married a Krolczyk." When not enjoying the lake, they live in Pewaukee, Wisconsin where Scott is a partner in a global public accounting firm.

Jim Andersen

Vice President & Membership Chair

jandersen@madisonradiologists.com Jim has owned a home on Tomahawk Lake with his parents and brother for the past



14 years. It is a favorite destination in both summer and winter months and a great escape from Madison, where he works as a radiologist with Madison Radiologists, S.C.

Tom Anderson

tanderson@digitalcheck.com Tom and his wife Pamela, along with their two sons Matt and Fitz, all live in the Chicago area.



In the early 1960s, Tom's mother and father, Tom and Elaine Anderson, bought a home on Tomahawk Lake next door to Clearwater Camp. It remains in the family today. Tom is President and

Chief Executive Officer of Digital Check Corp in Northfield, Illinois.

Rebecca Bortner Marketing & Public Relations Chair

rdb1974@qmail.com



Rebecca's homeaway–from-home is her family cabin on Tomahawk Lake. Her parents, Dave and Jane Bortner,

built their cabin southeast of Daniel's Point in the 70s. Along with her siblings, Dave and Barb, she continues the lake traditions with her family. Rebecca and her husband Chris have two sons, Joe and Will. When not in the north woods, they live in Milwaukee where Rebecca is a Director of Marketing for Harley-Davidson Motor Company.

Ned Greedy, Executive Director

edgreedy@gmail.com



Ned and his family have enjoyed summers on Tomahawk Lake since 1962. In 1966, they purchased their family home on the point of Blueberry Bay and Tomahawk Lake. It has

been an important part of Ned's life ever since. After a 35 year career in business, Ned and his wife Pam moved to the shores of Tomahawk Lake in 2004. Ned joined the Tomahawk Lake Association shortly afterward, and served two years as Vice President before becoming the association's first Executive Director. Ned and Pam have four adult children and two grandsons.

Kris Hunt Director at Large & Fundraising Chair

KrisHunt52@gmail.com



Kris and her husband Jon, along with their children Patrick, Charlie and Abby, have been coming to Tomahawk Lake for 11 years. After renting a cabin for several weeks each year, they decided that they wanted something more permanent and seven years ago purchased their home on Tomahawk Trail, overlooking the lake. Kris brings years of fundraising expertise to the Association. Kris served as chairman of the fundraising committee at her children's high school and President of the parent organization. Kris and Jon live in the suburbs of Chicago.

Jim Kavemeier

jimkavemeier@mac.com



Over the past 15 years, Jim and his wife Kathy have realized a lifelong dream of experiencing all that Tomahawk Lake has to offer. Their lake

home, located in Piene Bay, is a source of enjoyment for their family. Jim retired as Manager of the Waukesha County Park System and presently assists Kathy in her silk floral, tree and plant business. Jim chaired the committee responsible for developing the Tomahawk Lake Comprehensive Lake Management Plan. When not in Lake Tomahawk, they live in Waukesha, WI.

Noah Lottig



nrlottig@wisc.edu Noah and his wife Bryn live year around in Arbor Vitae. Noah is a research scientist and site manager at the UW Trout Lake

Research Station. His research focuses on understanding long-term water quality patterns in lakes and streams and the factors that influence those patterns. Noah completed his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin– Madison in aquatic sciences in 2009. Bryn's family has had a place on Tomahawk Lake for 15 years and they are excited at the opportunity to live on the lake year round. Noah and Bryn's free time is spent keeping up with their 10 ½ month old son, Meyer.

Louis Molepske, Jr.

molepskelaw@gmail.com



Louis' family has lived in the Minocqua area for over a generation. As a teenager, Louis spent his summers on Tomahawk Lake, commuting to town and work via an old Alumacraft fishing boat—well before he could

drive a car legally. Today, he spends his vacation waterskiing behind a 1985 Ski Nautique. Louis is a State Representative for the 71st Assembly District and Chair of the Assembly Committee on Jobs, the Economy and Small Business. He also sits on the Assembly Natural Resources Committee and the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

Adam R. Redman

Adam@RedmanRealtyGroup.com Adam was born and raised in Minocqua and grew up on the Minocqua chain. He attended MHLT



elementary and Lakeland Union High School and performed on the Min-Aqua Bats Water Ski team from 1999-2003. After six years in real estate, Adam and his wife Melissa opened their own business, Redman

Realty Group, LLC, located in downtown Minocqua. This June, Adam and Melissa purchased a home on Tomahawk Lake and are very excited to be your neighbor. Adam is on the board of directors at the Campanile Center of the Arts, Greater Northwoods MLS, Lakeland Assembly of God and is an active member of the Lions Club of Minocqua. He and Melissa have three boys, Tyson (5), Blake (3), Kaden (14 months) and are expecting another child in January!

Bob von Holdt

bobbyv50@hotmail.com



Bob moved to the lake in 2007. He is a Certified Financial Planner with Ameriprise Financial. Bob has two daughters, Becky and Rachel, and enjoys nature watching, cocktail cruises and musky fishing.

He is a UW–Stevens Point graduate and former board chairman, Green Circle Trail in Stevens Point.



CBCW (Clean Boats Clean Waters) Tom Haupt

Sentinels

Jim Andersen Peter Barck John Bloom Mike Brown Chuck Buchheit Sue Buchheit Jim Correnti Carol Correnti Allen Cote Roger Cote Steve Cote Jim Ferguson Sue Ferguson Matt Hankins Greg Harrold Shirley Harrold Jon Hunt

Kris Hunt Sue Irujo Jim Kavemeier Kathy Kavemeier Rvan Mallerv Andy McEachron Barbara McEachron Catherine Meitus Bob Miller Al Oppenheim Margo Oppenheim Becky Priebe John Priebe Garv Schindler Paul Shain Suzy Shain



Parade Volunteers

Steve, Ronna, Cassie & Calley EllwingJon & Kris HuntAl & MargoDavid MakiOppenheimLindsey OppenheimLinda & Fred Rikkers

Lake Fair Volunteers

Pam Anderson Tom Andershon Rebecca Bortner David Brock Noelle Brock Jack Frost Ned Greedy Pam Greedy Ed Hoerr Jon Hunt

Kris Hunt Barb Kirschner Margo Oppenheim Karla Ortman *Kemp Natural Resources Station contact* Sue Parker Paul Shain Bob von Holdt



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Tomahawk Lake Association P.O. Box 535, Minocqua, WI 54548



The annual Minocqua "Holiday", **Beef-A-Rama,** was held September 29. The DOT allowed the Town to close off Oneida Street (Main Street) this year for the entire day. The Chamber secured 30+ members of the U-Wisconsin marching band for the parade AND a fifth quarter. The weather couldn't have been any better, 68°-70° and sunny. The estimated 15,000 attendees were treated to beef sandwiches and gorgeous fall color. *Speaking of which...*

Fall color was spectacular this year!

The combination of warm weather, plenty of rain and a touch of frost created a picture not seen in many years. If you didn't make it up here to enjoy the fall, you really missed the fall beauty of the Northwoods. Colors of yellow, orange, red and rust in variable



The Island City durning Beef-A-Rama

shades made for exceptional reflections on our lakes. Oh... did I mention the **double** rainbow over Lake Tom on the 20th? A strange, quick storm passed over leaving a double rainbow. It disappeared and then a single rainbow appeared followed by a fantastic red southern sky. What a sight! Just one more reason to live in the Northwoods.

Are you ready for another auto parts shop? O'Reilly Auto Parts has started **construction** of their new building at the corner of Hwy. 51 and Hwy. J. Completion should be soon, as they are working days, nights and weekends. The concrete drive and parking lot have already been poured.

I used to be able to report on several new businesses coming to town. It seems that lately, I scratch my head harder and harder to find something to write about. Home sales have increased of late and hopefully this is the start of our economy coming back to life. However, I see more and **more businesses with "For Sale" signs** gracing their property – especially along Hwy. 51 South. I enjoy the slow growth of our community, keeping our rustic look, but I hate to see all the empty buildings. Hopefully these can be refurbished and filled again in the near future before more new buildings spring up.

I am running out of time before the deadline of articles is due on Rebecca's desk and I am running out of news worthy items—so instead I am just going to jump on the boat for one last ride around the lake while the weather is still good.

See you all in the spring when I hope there is more to report on!