



# Forest Lake Times

August 18, 2022 | Volume #120 | Issue #14 | 651-464-4601 | ForestLakeTimes.com | \$1.50



Bishofsky



Bahr



McLean

## Bishofsky, Bahr, and McLean take local legislative primaries

Hannah Davis  
News Editor

The local stages are set for the general election in November after the primary on Tuesday, Aug. 9.

Despite a last-minute endorsement from Sen. Karin Housley (R-SD 39) and retiring Rep. Bob Dettmer (R-HD 39A), Tina Riehle couldn't overcome Mark Bishofsky, who had received the state GOP's endorsement for House District 33B. Bishofsky secured 59.99% of the

vote, with 1,637 votes. Bishofsky moves on to face DFLer Josiah Hill, who ran against Housley for Senate District 39 in 2020, in the general election.

Housley's challenger for the newly formed District 33, which includes Forest Lake, Scandia and Marine on St. Croix, will be Nancy McLean. McLean beat out challenger Brian Baber in the DFL primary, tallying 90.99% of the votes, or

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## Single-vehicle crash on I-35 kills one, sends another to hospital

Hannah Davis  
News Editor

A fatal crash just north of Wyoming on I-35 shut down southbound traffic for more than an hour

on Friday. The single car roll-over accident, which took place just 1 mile north of the Viking Bou-

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## Martin Lake association eyes delisting from impaired water list

*Martin Lake community's dedication hooks results, lake expected to be off list in two years*

Natalie Ryder  
Community Editor

"Root Beer Lake" is what John Mattila, the Martin Lakers Association president, said Martin Lake had been dubbed by locals due to its murkiness. But now, after a decades-long water quality improvement effort, the residents and the Anoka Conservation District are nearing their end goal: to get Martin Lake off the impaired waters list.

"They really wanted to do something to improve the water quality in their lake. Their lake is one that, 20 years ago, had frequent and fairly long-lasting algae blooms in the summertime," said Jamie Schurbon, a watershed project manager with Anoka Conservation District.

In the early 2000s, the initial step the lake association and conservation district took was diagnosing why Martin Lake was on the impaired list. Contributing factors included the poor quality of water in



Photo by Natalie Ryder

Carp Solutions emptied six nets, bringing in more than 100 carp on Thursday, July 21, which they will do a few times each summer. Carp removal days have brought in large fish quantities of more than 1,000.

Typo Lake, which drains into Martin Lake, carp populations disrupting sediment, and nutrient runoff from the neighboring community.

"I came in with some great ideas that we were just going to really go after this. And I remember specifically talking to one of my colleagues... and he shook his head at me and said, 'You know, Jamie, that's going to take decades,'" Schurbon joked.

Typo Lake was viewed as the No. 1 issue, but deemed too large of an issue to tackle.

"The water quality in [Typo

Lake] is extremely poor. ... that lake's an 'F' every year, so that's where Martin Lake's getting its water, so it's a major cause," Schurbon said. Despite Typo's downstream flow into Martin Lake, managing carp populations in both lakes and runoff would prove to be the key to a healthy Martin Lake, with a consistent and dedicated community.

### Runoff treatment

Algae blooms can happen due to the lack of runoff treatment ponds. The creation of those ponds was

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### COMMUNITY



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## Martin Lake

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deemed an easy fix, and so they began creating those more than a decade ago.

“We needed to do something that has real tangible benefits and that we could see to gain some momentum,” Schurbon said. They installed a few rain gardens initially on residential properties.

Before the addition of the rain gardens or three stormwater ponds, phosphorus in Martin Lake averaged around 100 micrograms per liter between 2000 to 2010, according to Schurbon. For four of the past five years, its phosphorus levels averaged around 59 micrograms per liter, which is just barely below the state standard of 60 micrograms.

“The phosphorus levels have been below that state standard – and they had not been below the state standard ever in our entire record, before that dating back through the ‘90s. It was a very clear positive trend,” Schurbon said.

Even though this is a positive stride, Martin Lake needs to continue maintaining low phosphorus levels and work to lower its algae concentrations, which are higher than state standards.

However, there are signs that will happen in just a couple years, with the recent removal of the downstream branch of Sunrise River from the water impaired list.

“It was impaired for high PH, and that high PH was directly caused by algae production in the lake,” Schurbon said.

The efforts of Martin Lake community has led to Martin Lake’s grade moved from a ‘D’ to a ‘C,’ proving their decades of effort are changing the tide. According to Schurbon, achieving a C+ would mean Martin Lake is on its way off the state water impaired list. The Metropolitan Council created the grade letter system to help communities better understand annual cumulative data that accounts for overall lake

quality. It’s the first time in Schurbon’s career when the Anoka Conservation District aided a body of water to be removed from the water impaired list, which he said has been a rewarding experience to share with the Martin Lake community.

### Carp removal efforts

“I think at one time we said we had nine times the amount of carp that a healthy lake should have. So the goal isn’t to eliminate them, the goal is to control them,” Mattila said.

Carp populations totaled around 15,000 in each lake when they began assessments in the early 2000s, but all of the fish were relatively the same size and weight, leading them to believe they weren’t repopulating, according to Schurbon.

“There’s been past carp management that has brought down the numbers, and they quickly replenish themselves. So there was a sign that we would be able to reduce and then keep them down,” Schurbon said.

To aid an effective removal process from both Typo and Martin Lakes, the association, with the district’s assistance in-



Photos by Natalie Ryder

John Mattila, left, and Mike Smith are part of the Martin Lakers Association and volunteer for carp removals and have hosted box nets annually.

stalled barriers between their waterways to prevent carp migration to spawn or survive during the seasonal shifts.

“If we cut off that movement, we can both reduce winter survival and reduce spawning, so it was a really important step to keep carp from reproducing more once we started removing them,” Schurbon said.

Large carp populations are disruptive and invasive because of their aggressive feeding and mating hab-

its that drudge up ground sediment, and how their digestive systems disrupt the native ecosystems and produce algae blooms.

The carp removal process has been a community effort by the Martin Lake neighborhood, who have given time and money to meet the conservation district’s grant needs over the years. For the past few years Martin Lake residents have used box nets to measure and catch carp with help from the organization Carp Solutions.

This season there are six box nets, which lay on the lake floor until Carp Solutions employees and local volunteers, like Mattila and Martin Lakers Association officer Mike Smith, lift the nets to catch and remove carp a few times each summer. All six box nets are placed in front of residents’ homes, who must measure the amount of corn eaten every day, which has required community investment and involvement over the years.

“They used to put in 50 to 100 pounds and now we kind of leave it at 25 to make them kind of wanting more and keep coming back,” Mattila said.

He’s hosted a box net for a few years and joked that it’s not difficult until you get home late and have to toss on waders to measure the corn remaining in the feed bag.

“The big deal is getting the people [involved],” Mattila said.

Throughout the past few years, the Martin Lakers Association has garnered support from neighbors along the lake and from others in the community for their work to improve the water, and the association began honoring individuals with its Friends of

Martin Lakers award.

One day about 2,800 carp were pulled out of the lake, but carp harvesting company Carp Solutions had their truck break down, so a bystander of the removal offered his truck to transport all of the fish to one of their disposal sites.

“[We] gave it to him one year,” Mattila said.

“They’ve volunteered countless hours, so, you know, I can celebrate myself, but ... having these other folks excited about it, too, is really what makes it super satisfying,” Schurbon said.

The work isn’t complete yet, as both maintaining efforts and mitigation efforts are still needed to further the health of the lake. Despite uncertainty over grant dollars left for the project, the lake association and conservation district are optimistic they will continue their efforts to maintain low phosphorus levels and be deemed unimpaired.

“[We’ll] continue the smaller efforts to maintain population, and we’re going to continue to do small stormwater projects and other projects around the lake,” Schurbon said.



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