In Part I, I gave you basic information about naturalizing your shoreline. Now I’d like to tell you about our own experience.

We started our shoreline project in the spring of 2008. We knew that it would be a multi-year project and we would need help because of the size of the project. We also did not want to do the full shoreline because we like swimming, boating, waterskiing and fishing, so we needed an area next to the boat house to place all the equipment and access the water and dock. I wanted an unstructured design with lots of grasses and wildflowers. We wanted to naturalize both a hillside along the north side of our cabin and the shoreline. We planned to install and add to different sections as we had time and money.

Being on a hillside, which my parents had landscaped twenty-five years ago when they built their house, we choose to work within the constraints of the tiered landscaping. Trying to removing the tiers or retaining wall would have been more expensive than we could afford.

The hillside, which had been left to go native, was mostly open dirt with a few scraggly plants. The shoreline had a concrete block/rock retaining wall that separated a 15’ wide strip of turf grass and weeds from the sand beach. We decided to leave the retaining wall, ugly as it is, and cover it with plantings. We also decided to leave a 12’ length of turf glass in the area closest to the boat house on the south side. We hired Prairie Restorations to eradicate the turf grass and weed, and to seed and cover the area. We selected two seed mixtures, both with plants that would be 1-3’ tall; one for the very shady hillside and one for the fairly sunny area along the shore. During that initial summer, we watered twice a week, which was not required but recommended when planting from mostly seed.

That first summer, the seeds germinated and small plants started to grow through the erosion blanket. We had also installed a single row of sod flats (1 year old grass and wildflower pieces of sod) along the beach side edge of the area, where the thickest growth can be seen.

At the end of the summer, we mowed the area to the ground and stored the sections of our docks there. As the spring came, the area was flooded during the high water of the spring thaw.

The second summer brought a sea of yellow. The Black-Eyed Susan bloomed prolifically with a few grasses and other wildflowers popping up here and there. The few wildflower plants we had put in the rocks along the front of the retaining wall,
A few more Fayette Brossard stories...

LA’s former president, Al Henry sent a nice letter to the board about the last newsletter. If you read the Spring Edition of the RLA Newsletter, you no doubt read Dallas Karl’s column On the Lake in which he recounted stories of a legendary Rice Lake fisherman, Fayette Brossard. If you missed it, past editions of the newsletter are on our website:  

ricekakestearnsco.org

Al Henry shared yet more stories about Fayette that you might enjoy. He has allowed us to share them with you here. He says...

“If you got a few old timers together who knew Fayette, there would be enough stories to fill a book. The article made me think of many times I hung out with him. It was a good way to learn about the lake. He enjoyed telling stories.

He told about having uninvited fishermen cutting through his property in the winter, so he removed the sack from two skunks he trapped and placed the bag of scent in the path. He laughed heartily and said the problem went away.

The first time we fished together, we were trolling for Walleyes when he said to put the pontoon in reverse as he hooked a big one. To this day, it’s the biggest fish caught on my boat. Unfortunately is was a Carp in excess of 20 pounds. I think it was August 1980 when Fayette, a coworker and I went after Sunfish. Fayette had me drive to a spot near the center of the lake. According to the depth finder, it was 11 feet deep. We moved slowly as he slid a light mushroom anchor across the bottom until he directed me to stop and drop the pontoon anchor. Pretty quick we were catching the biggest Sunfish I ever saw. Out of the 60 Sunfish, I caught 6; my coworker didn’t catch any and Fayette was like a machine fishing with a jig stick, removing his fish and baiting his hook.

I have a hospital baby scale my daughter lets me use until there is a new baby in the family. It’s tough to get it clean. The scale showed most to be one pound, a few ¾ pound and a few ½ pound. Fayette cleaned all the fish, again performing like a machine. I washed and bagged and tried to stay out of the way. This performance was repeated a few days later with Laura Hanks and her son, Jerry, Fayette and I. Same outcome as before with the machine catching our limit, with Jerry and I catching only a few, Laura faring slightly better. Each time Fayette led me to this great spot, I carefully lined up trees on each shoreline. Eventually I had a fish finder but I never got into forming like a machine. I washed and bagged and tried to stay out of the way. This performance was repeated a few days later with Laura Hanks and her son, Jerry, Fayette and I. Same outcome as before with the machine catching our limit, with Jerry and I catching only a few, Laura faring slightly better. Each time Fayette led me to this great spot, I carefully lined up trees on each shoreline. Eventually I had a fish finder but I never got into those huge sunnies again.

On our property, there was our cabin, a guest cabin and a fish cleaning house. There were pipes going from one to the other buildings. I needed to know where these underground pipes were. Fayette said he would come down with divining rods and show me. He happened to come when we had guests. My friend asked what was going on. When I told my friend, he said that was an old wives tale. I asked Fayette to show him. My friend took the divining rods made from coat hangers and walked across the lawn with Fayette. We all enjoyed seeing the look on his face as the rods moved when he crossed the buried pipes.

I am of the opinion if Fayette didn’t like you, it would be pretty evident. After we bought our property, the Taylors visited us. It was a cold, windy day. We were sitting in our car on what is now the Taylor property. Fayette came over to say hello and probably to see what was going on. I introduced Jim and said Jim was interested in the property and wanted to know the price. To my amazement, Fayette replied that he would not sell to someone he didn’t know. I felt bad as I knew he would like Jim a lot when he got to know him. It was several weeks later that Gary Brossard called me and told me he had a buyer for the cabin on the hill, but Fayette said he could not sell it until he checked with me. I asked Gary the price and relayed the information. Fayette and Jim became great friends.”

Editor’s Note:

If I may add my own story about Fayette...my husband Tim and I bought the property next to Al Henry from someone who had previously bought it from Fayette. Before we built our house, we were burning some brush and wood one winter day when Fayette walked up to us and barked gruffly, “Who are you?” We explained we had bought the property. Fayette then walked us through the whole lot bending the branches of trees we should keep and others that we should take out. There were no others like Fayette. He knew and understood what to take from nature and what to leave alone.
By Dr. Edmund J. Sass

1. You probably know that the Walleye is the Minnesota state fish, and you might even know that in Canada it’s often called a ‘pickerel’. However, do you know to what fish family the Walleye belongs?
   A. Pike  
   B. Bass  
   C. Trout  
   D. Perch

2. Here in Minnesota we usually just use the generic term ‘sunfish’ to refer to any fish from this genus. However, there are actually many different species of sunfish in Minnesota. Of the sunfish species listed below, which is the largest and most popular variety in our state?
   A. Pumpkinseed  
   B. Bluegill  
   C. Green Sunfish  
   D. Longear Sunfish

3. Though often thought of as a southern fish, this bass has become quite popular with Minnesota anglers. Particularly at home in the shallow, weedy lakes of central and southern Minnesota, this fish is often taken on plastic worms, spinners and other artificial baits. Which of the following is it?
   A. Largemouth Bass  
   B. Smallmouth Bass  
   C. Rock Bass  
   D. White Bass

4. Of the following species, which is the only member of the temperate or true bass family?
   A. Smallmouth Bass  
   B. Warmouth Bass  
   C. Rock Bass  
   D. White Bass

5. Of the species listed below, which has the potential to attain the largest size?
   A. Lake Sturgeon  
   B. Muskellunge  
   C. Freshwater Drum  
   D. Longnose Gar

6. Which of the following trout species is native to Minnesota?
   A. Rainbow Trout  
   B. Brown Trout  
   C. Brook Trout  
   D. Cutthroat Trout

7. A favorite food of larger trout, this inhabitant of clear, rocky streams is sometimes called a muddler minnow by trout fishermen. However, it is actually a:
   A. Creek Chub  
   B. Stonecat  
   C. Mottled Sculpin  
   D. Hornyhead Chub

8. Minnesotans call them eelpout, ling or lawyer. But which of the names below is the real name for the not-so-attractive fish?
   A. Burbot  
   B. Bowfin  
   C. Freshwater Drum  
   D. Hornyhead Chub

9. Of the species listed below, which is not native to Minnesota?
   A. Highfin Carpsucker  
   B. Common Carp  
   C. Bigmouth Buffalo  
   D. Longnose Sucker

10. The crappie is a popular panfish in Minnesota and many anglers don’t know that there is more than one species of crappie that inhabit our state’s lakes. Which of the crappie species is the most common and widely distributed in Minnesota?
    A. White Crappie  
    B. Silver Crappie  
    C. Black Crappie  
    D. Striped Crappie

11. These members of the catfish family are common and widely distributed in Minnesota. The three species found in our state are named for colors (black, brown or yellow) though they are often not distinguishable on that basis. All are edible and relatively popular with anglers. To which of the fish below does this description apply?
    A. Bullhead  
    B. Stonecat  
    C. Buffalo Fish  
    D. Stickleback

12. Often taken through the ice, these members of the whitefish family are commonly called tullibee or lake herring. What is their proper name?
    A. Mooneye  
    B. Lake Whitefish  
    C. Cisco  
    D. Round Whitefish

13. When Minnesotans say they’re fishing for ‘pike’, they usually mean which of the following species?
    A. Northern Pike  
    B. Redfin Pickerel  
    C. Chain Pickerel  
    D. Grass Pickerel

14. Sometimes called ‘sheepshead’, this is the only member of its family found in fresh water. Can you identify it from among the species listed below?
    A. White Perch  
    B. Bloater  
    C. Mooneye  
    D. Freshwater Drum
started to show up. In the fall, once again we mowed the area and stored the dock. The following spring, the area flooded again for about a week, during the spring thaw.

The second summer brought a whole new mixture of grasses and wildflowers. Since the Black-Eyed Susans are biennials, only a few of them flowered here and there. The Little Bluestem and Side Oat Grama grasses flourished, along with several types of Asters, Wild Bergamot, White and Purple Prairie Clover and Golden Alexanders. At mid summer, the grasses were filling in and the wildflowers are just starting to bloom.

Late in the second summer, many of the wildflowers were in full bloom. On the hillside, we have some Wild Strawberries, mixed in with Asters and a few grasses but the hillside, being so shady, has not established as quickly as the sunny shoreline area.

Since last summer was our third summer of growth, it is now time for us to burn the area. Burning is part of managing a natural shoreline. It discourages the growth of woody plants and weeds. Burning can be done in the late fall or early spring. We’ve decided to burn this spring, probably in mid-May. Burning at that time of the spring will kill any weeds sprouting anew but not affect the native grasses and wildflowers, which generally start their growth a little later and have deep root systems to sustain them. We have found that each year has brought a new look and we’re excited to see what it looks like this summer, after our first burn.

As with many of our projects, our natural shoreline will be an on-going and changing project. This year, in addition to the burn, we are planning to plant more shady plants on the top half of our hillside, add more varieties of wildflower to the shoreline area, particularly on the beach, and change the remaining 12’ of shoreline area to buffalo grass instead of Kentucky blue and rye grass. We’ll let you know how it goes.

Editors note: If you have questions for Susan about naturalizing your shoreline, she can be reached at: shanderson@labycon.com

If you missed Part 1, click on RLA’s website and go to newsletters. Part 1 is published in the Spring 2011 edition.

The summer edition is also on the website, where you can see Susan’s pictures in color.
MAY 2011

Members discussed the open position on the North Fork Crow River Watershed District (NFCRWD) Board of Managers. John Hanson applied for the seat. County Commissioner, Don Otte assigned it to another applicant. RLA’s concern is that the lakes are not represented on the watershed board. The watershed board needs input from lake constituents. RLA and Koronis Lake Association (KLA) have actively worked with the watershed district for many years and are affected by their decisions and priorities. As we move forward, RLA wants a voice in the decision process. Hanson remains interested in a position should one become available.

Members voted to support the Pheasants Forever funding agreement. RLA will pay $800 in 2011 and 2012 to fund the initiative with area farmers to sign vulnerable buffer acreage into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). KLA and NFCRWD are also contributing.

Susan Anderson updated members on the current year’s grant application cycle. If RLA is to apply for grant funding, it will need to be accomplished before August, 2011.

Guests, Ron Mergen and Chuck DeWolf from the City of Paynesville explained the findings from Paynesville’s stormwater study. The city plans to decrease the force of the stormwater flowing into the Crow River by installing drop boxes. The process is expected to decrease river-bank erosion and therefore, nutrient load down the river as it flows into Rice Lake.

Members discussed a plan for improving RLA’s website. Kay Hanson will obtain a quote from advertising agency, Th!nk Creative.

JUNE 2011

Members discussed RLA’s Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) draft report received from Wenck Associates. A final stakeholder meeting is scheduled for June 29, 2011. RLA will submit several questions not answered in the draft report.

Arrangements are pending with Camp Ojibway for interested gardeners to maintain the native garden that RLA helped install two summers ago. Eight to ten volunteer gardeners would be needed to maintain the hillside garden two to three times during the growing season. The camp will pay RLA for maintenance and provide training to distinguish native plants from weeds or unwanted species. Training date is to be determined and will be announced.

Two board resignations will be tendered at the annual meeting in August. Kay Hanson’s and Jim Ellickson’s terms will have expired. Members interested in learning more about board positions may contact any current board member.

Treasurer’s report was read and approved.

President, Brent Holmberg reported that the Sheriff’s Department Water Patrol is stopping boats to confirm working navigation lights, adequate life preservers for all aboard and presence of a throwable life ring. DNR officer, Todd Vanderwerf has been very active with checking boaters for zebra mussels. He has also been checking individual freezers for compliance with the two-day catch rule.

RLA has participated in Minnesota’s Adopt-A-Highway program for several years. This year, rather than organizing the project through the board, we will ask neighborhoods to take turns conducting the pick-up. More information will be available at the Annual Meeting in August.

Members voted to accept a bid for $1,000 to have the website redone through Th!nk Creative Advertising. The site will be interactive, include a blog and will allow board members to update it easily with revisions.

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ANNUAL BREAKFAST MTG
August 6th, 8:30-10:30 ~ Camp Ojibways
THANKS go to the Rice Lake Association Boat Check Volunteers! They braved the cold weather on the May 14th Fishing Opener to share the Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers information with the fishing public at our two public access launches.

Their task that day remained much the same as it has been in the past years with just a few additional points. Volunteers:

- Welcomed boaters to Rice Lake
- Shared Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers information that reinforces boaters responsibility to inspect their boat, trailer and equipment and remove visible aquatic plants, animals and mud before entering the lake and when leaving the water access.
- Conducted a survey of boaters and anglers
- Reminded them that the DNR has stepped up enforcement of regulations regarding the spread of Zebra Mussels. Fines can be up to $50 for violations.

Zebra Mussels, in their immature stage, are microscopic and are spread by transportation of infested water. It has been documented that 95% of Zebra Mussels spread in Minnesota are related to the recreational public which has prompted the new Drain Plug Law. This new regulation requires boaters to drain boats and equipment before leaving each and every lake.

Much of our concern on May 14th was for Zebra Mussels but we also included Eurasian Milfoil in our message to Rice Lake boaters. Thanks again to the following for their help with this very important lake association project!


We all need to do our part to keep exotic plants and animals out of Rice Lake! Additional information will be provided at RLA’s Annual Breakfast Meeting in August.

Dr. Sass is a professor at the College of St. Benedict/St. John’s University and a Rice Lake angler. He was kind enough to allow us to reprint his MN Fishing Quiz. For answers click on RLA website, ricelakestearnsco.org.