

# 2023

## *Wisconsin Lake Stewardship and Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards*

**BUILDING TRUST  
AROUND WATER**



**TOGETHER**


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**Banquet and Awards Ceremony**

*Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention*

*April 20, 2023*

# *Join us in celebrating the stewards of our lakes and streams!*




## **Long-term Volunteer Lake and Stream Monitors**

The Wisconsin Citizen Lake Monitoring Network and Water Action Volunteers Program Leaders will congratulate several long-term lake and stream monitoring volunteers.



## **Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards**

Since 2002, the Division of Extension at UW-Madison and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recognize a small selection of individuals and organizations every year for their efforts leading to increased participation in stream monitoring, collecting stream data, and sharing their knowledge and data.



## **Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards**

The prestigious Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards celebrate the extraordinary volunteer and professional efforts made to protect and improve lakes in Wisconsin. These Lake 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.

People are nominated for Lake Stewardship Awards by their peers - what a meaningful way to say, "Thank you!" to the people in your community who work so hard to care for our lakes. Winners of these awards join a select group of individuals and organizations whose unmatched dedication, vision, and commitment ensure that Wisconsin's legacy of lakes will be safe and secure for generations to come.

## Long-term Volunteer Lake Monitors


### 30 Years

Rod Olson, Lake Desair, Barron County

Linda Daniels, Upper Nemahbin Lake, Waukesha County

Allen and Rosemary Toussaint, Alva Lake, Oneida County


Otto Schoeneck, Spirit Lake, Taylor County



## Long-term Volunteer Stream Monitor

### Kathy Bridge - 20 years

For 20 years, Kathy has been monitoring Scuppernong Creek in southeastern Wisconsin. During the year, Kathy monitors the creek for water temperature, water transparency, and dissolved oxygen. Partial to the caddisfly, Kathy also enjoys macroinvertebrate sampling on Scuppernong Creek. Kathy is often joined by her children and other local youth while monitoring her stream site. She has even volunteered to work with local home-school groups to teach stream ecology and all the fascinating critters that live in the water. Kathy enjoys the public nature of her monitoring site, which is located on an Ice Age Trail bridge. Often times, interested hikers will stop by to chat with Kathy while she is out sampling and she is happy to share information about the importance of long-term stream monitoring. Thank you for 20 years of volunteerism, Kathy!



## Wisconsin Volunteer Stream Monitoring Awards

### **Barb Bauer and Paula Brandmeier ~ Adult Category**

Barb Bauer and Paula Brandmeier began monitoring water quality at three sites along Token Creek in Dane County in 2016, when they were asked by the Rock River Coalition to help collect data on the stream. They visit the stream to measure baseline parameters, as well as collect nutrient samples. In addition to monitoring the creek, Barb and Paula have served as dedicated members of the Token Creek Conservancy Committee with the Village of Windsor for a combined 33 years. In this time, they helped develop a master plan for the Conservancy, often partnering with local towns, churches and community groups to accomplish their work. As Addie Schlechel said in her nomination letter, “They are generous with their time and their passion for healthy waters has led them to go above and beyond in caring and advocating for Token Creek and its watershed. Congratulations Barb and Paula!”

# Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Awards

## History

For 34 years, the Wisconsin Lakes Partnership has been celebrating Wisconsin's outstanding lake stewards in categories that recognize outstanding contributions of individuals, organized groups, educators, youth, and businesses. Last year, we changed the categories to reflect the importance of the organizational work and projects in which individuals and lake organizations are involved. We want to recognize those who are strengthening their community capacity with the goal of protecting and improving lake health.

## What is Capacity?

Our model of lake organization capacity is built around four related parts: membership, organization, relationships, and programs. Membership is the basis for the other three: a group needs members who provide financial and volunteer support to fuel their efforts. Organizational capacity concerns how a lake association or lake district conducts its internal affairs. Organizations develop relational capacity by collaborating and networking with external people and groups. Lake groups leverage these first three types of capacity to increase their ability to get things done: programmatic capacity.

## Nomination Categories

We understand that capacity looks different for each organization since each is working on different areas in order to boost their ability to get things done. We want to recognize individuals and organizations who are strengthening the capacity of their organization in the following categories:

### **Excellence in Public Engagement**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who has taken steps to increase public understanding, engagement, and support for lake issues and opportunities.

### **Excellence in Building Partnerships**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who has helped an organization develop new, or strengthen existing, external relationships to benefit a lake or watershed.

### **Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health**

Recognizing an individual, group, or business who excels in programs that improve the quality of our lakes due to program implementation. Program

implementation will need to go above and beyond and have measurable impact.

### Selection Process

We rolled over nominations for two years and because we did not accept nominations in 2021, the 2019 and 2020 nominations were also considered along with 2022 nominations. Winners were selected by a team of reviewers who ranked applications according to the criteria listed in the nomination process. Because our collective action to protect and restore lakes is more effective with diverse perspectives at the table, reviewers also took into consideration groups and projects that include diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work.



## **New Nominees for Lake Stewardship Awards in 2023**

(some nominees chose not to be listed)

David Averbeck, Horsehead Lake P&R District #1  
Mary Beckley, Upper Kaubashine Property Owners Association  
James Brancel, Spider Lake Association  
Dan Butkus, Squash Lake Association  
Hatch Lake Association  
David Luka, Twenty-Six Lake Property Owners Association  
Bill McCormick, Waterford Waterway Management District  
Mark Michel, Long Lake Association  
Mary VandeKamp Nohl, Ashippun Lake P&R District

Know someone deserving of a Lake Stewardship or Volunteer Stream Monitoring award? Nominate them to be included in the running for 2023! Nomination forms can be found on the Wisconsin Water Week website.

**[wisconsinwaterweek.org](https://www.wisconsinwaterweek.org)**

# 2023 Lake Stewardship Awards Winners

## **Clark Albert ~ Excellence in Public Engagement**

Clark Albert is this year's recipient of the Wisconsin Lakes Stewardship Award for Excellence in Public Engagement. He and his wife Susi have had a summer home on White Sand Lake since 1998. White Sand Lake is one of the lakes in the Bear River Watershed. Bear River Watershed is the largest watershed in Lac du Flambeau and completely within the Reservation's boundaries. It is in Vilas County approximately 12 miles northwest of Minocqua.

Clark was instrumental in establishing White Sand Lake Association in 2004 and has served as Vice President or President since its inception. He is currently President of the Association. As such, he collaborates with the Lac du Flambeau Tribe and the Town Lakes Committee in various stewardship efforts on the reservation including White Sand Lake.

Clark is heavily involved in the Association's Clean Boats, Clean Waters program, supporting grant applications to fund student interns that monitor the public boat landing. This program is very important to the lake as it is free of the major aquatic invasive species found in many nearby lakes.

Another important endeavor spearheaded by Clark was the research conducted with Freshwater Solutions and Northland College on swimmer's itch. Although no magic bullet was found, the research identified a number of strategies to minimize the likelihood of contracting this bothersome parasite on the lake.

Clarks sends timely announcements about matters involving the lake including emails regarding lake clarity and temperature. His science background helps interpret and explain the results of many of the tests affecting the lake's health. The association also publishes a robust newsletter that keeps members informed of pertinent matters regarding the lake and related social and educational events.

Perhaps Denise Odell, in her letter of recommendation sums it up the best by saying, "...equally important is Clark's even temperament and ability to preside with a light touch. He is respected and beloved by the members of the lake association, which accounts for the fact that he has been elected year after year as the president, a task not many would undertake. Certainly, he could be doing other things with his time, but we are most fortunate to be the beneficiaries of his talent and willingness to serve us. We hope you will honor him with the Lake Stewardship award."

Congratulations Clark!

## **Rick Georgeson ~ Excellence in Building Partnerships**

This year's recipient of the Excellence in Building Partnerships award, Rick Georgeson, has sailed the waters of Petenwell and Castle Rock lakes for over forty years, observing both the beauty and the impairments of the Wisconsin River system.

Before moving to Nekoosa full time, Rick taught building trades at Tomah High School and later was an administrator at Western Wisconsin Technical College. During that time, he often spent nights on his sailboat on Petenwell Lake.

Rick's love of the water brought him to a group called Petenwell and Castle Rock Stewards (PACRS) in 2007 where he served as president from 2008 to 2020. His leadership style has been the key to PACRS success. His skills as a former educator and avid sailor made him an excellent fit for guiding PACRS. In her nomination submission, Colette Camerano states, "It has been Rick's philosophy that bringing people together will create trust and a better opportunity for solving the water quality issue on Petenwell and Castle Rock lakes."

One of many successes achieved by PACRS under Rick's leadership include the Pontoons and Politics program which began in 2009. This program brought state legislators and the DNR secretary to observe the lake and led to the appropriation of \$750,000 over a five year period for a Comprehensive Basin Monitoring program and, in 2019, to the largest approved TMDL in Wisconsin's history.

After several successful Pontoons and Politics events that included local politicians and conservationists as well as agricultural producers, Rick became directly involved with the annual Healthy Soil Healthy Water conference. Rick quickly came to learn that you cannot talk about water quality without talking about the farming community. He also noticed that agricultural producers were often not in the room when discussing water quality. The partnerships PACRS nurtured has led to the creation of 8 producer-led councils in the Wisconsin River watershed.

Although Rick recently stepped down from the leadership role in PACRS, he recently joined the board of Wisconsin Lakes and we look forward to his continuing contributions to the health Wisconsin's waters.

Congratulations Rick!

## **Floyd Schmidt ~ Programmatic Excellence for Lake Health**

Chute Pond is a 440-acre lake 45 miles northwest of Green Bay in Oconto County. The lake was formed by the construction of Chute Pond Dam on the Oconto River in 1937. Its shoreline is now home to a YMCA camp, many summer homes, a public campground and a county park and is enjoyed by many throughout northeast Wisconsin. A key member of the group maintaining the health of Chute Pond is Floyd Schmidt, this year's winner of the Programmatic Excellence in Lake Health award.

Floyd and his wife, Edith, bought their property on the lake in 2003. After extensive renovations, the family moved year-round to Chute Pond in 2011. Shortly thereafter, Floyd became involved with the Chute Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District, serving as treasurer from 2012 to 2017, and as chairman since.

Floyd is very active in all aspects of the lake's health including the Clean Boats, Clean Waters Program, water quality sampling and the control of Eurasian Water Milfoil. Regarding EWM, he has managed a winter drawdown in 2016, several herbicide treatments with and without the use of limno curtains, residual herbicide sampling and the operation and maintenance of two harvesters.

Under Floyd's guidance, the district has received numerous DNR and Oconto County grants. As an active member of the Oconto County Waterway Association, Floyd was part of the group that convinced the county board the importance of protecting the lakes, which led to Oconto County setting aside \$230,000 for a Healthy Lakes cost share program.

Working closely with the Oconto County Land Conservation Office and the Department of Natural Resources, Floyd has seen over 25 Healthy Lakes projects installed by landowners including native plantings, rain gardens, fish sticks and runoff diversions.

In her nomination submission, Brenda Nordin states that "Floyd has been a great leader for the holistic management of Chute Pond. ... Chute Pond is in good hands with Floyd and his hard work has laid the foundation for the health of the lake well into the future."

With all his hard work and accomplishments, Floyd truly embodies the spirit of the Wisconsin Lake Stewardship Award for Programmatic Excellence in Lake Health.

Congratulations Floyd!