



# LakeFront

Quarterly Newsletter of the Whitefish Lake Institute

Fall 2014

## New Office Location

We moved!! Stop by and see us at our new office location-550 East 1<sup>st</sup> Street #103. Situated between Runner Up Sports and Mi Casa Pottery (which is next to Jersey Boys Pizza), our downtown location will help us serve the community more efficiently.

WLI completed a minor remodel of the new office including partition walls and flooring. Special thanks to the Whitefish Community Foundation for supporting our remodel efforts through a small grant.



(L-R) WLI board members Hank Ricklefs and John Collins in front of the new office in downtown Whitefish.

Thank you to former board member Dan Weinberg for his generous support of the organization through reduced rent at our old office location for almost ten years, Also, thanks to WLI board member Karen Reeves, Science Advisory Committee member Dick Solberg, Walt Curtis, and Mae Koopal for help with the move.

## WLI Receives Whitefish Community Foundation Russ and Mary Jane Street Community Service Award (con't page 2)...



(L-R) WLI staff Lori Curtis, Mike Koopal, Josh Gubits, and Jen Croskrey, along with board member Sue Fletcher, accept the Russ and Mary Jane Street Community Service Award. Photo courtesy WCF.

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**Founded in 2005**

*The Whitefish Lake Institute is committed to science, education, and community stewardship to protect and improve Whitefish Lake and Whitefish area water resources today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.*

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 Whitefish Lake Institute

Cover Photo:

*Autumn colors around Whitefish Lake.*  
 Courtesy: Gravityshots.com

*(continued from page 1...Russ and Mary Jane Street Community Service Award)...*

At the Whitefish Community Foundation's Annual Grants Award Ceremony on November 6<sup>th</sup>, WLI received the first annual Russell and Mary Jane Street Community Service Award.

The award honors the Streets, who left the WCF an unrestricted gift of just over \$1.1 Million. The majority of the gift was placed in the WCF's permanent endowment fund where the interest will help WCF benefit our community for years to come through the Community Grant Program.



*Russ and Mary Jane Street*

Known as the hardest working folks that never went anywhere, the Streets built community through their businesses and unselfish giving to the community from starting the Rotary Pancake breakfast, to

being part of the Dirty Dozen that started the Whitefish Carnival, to Russ being one of the original board members of Big Mountain. But it all started with humble beginnings.

Russ and Mary Jane grew up in Whitefish. Russ' dad homesteaded on Dakota Avenue where Russ had to shovel a path out to the root cellar to get to the potatoes that often sustained them in winter. Poor eyesight kept Russ from a military or railroad career. Instead, he embarked on an entrepreneurial path. He was a man with a wealth of ideas and energy tempered by a woman that made sure his ideas were grounded. They were equal partners in everything they did.

Early on, they ran a grocery store in Whitefish and lived upstairs with their two adopted boys. But Russ soon started to branch out starting with Alpine Touch Seasoning which is based in Choteau today.

Russ understood the lake's potential for building community. In the early 50's he bought the cottages at Bay Point and added to them with six houses he moved from Hungry Horse after the dam was built. Russ cooked for his guests at Bay Point along the shoreline or barbecued aboard what was probably the first pontoon boat on the lake that he built out of airline fuel tanks. At Bay Point, Russ and Mary Jane developed a loyal clientele of vacationers, many of whom retired in our community.

Russ had a personal connection to the lake and often snuck away to a small cabin at Brittell Point of Pines to recharge. He also extended the sewer to Bay Point before it was required.

The Street's Whitefish history was colorful and the concept of giving back never escaped them. WLI is proud to be the first recipient of an award in their honor.



## How We Are Funded

We are often asked how WLI is funded. It's a simple question with a not so easy answer. Through the years, we've developed a diverse revenue stream through creative partnerships and initiatives.

At the base of our funding is **membership**- community members and businesses that share a vision of clean water in Whitefish and the need to give the lake a voice. We also receive **charitable donations** of cash or physical property like our research vessel and truck.

WLI seeks **grants** to support our Science, Education, and Community Stewardship Programs that benefit Whitefish Lake and local water resources. In support of our scientific work in 2014, we received grants from the Cadeau Foundation, the Whitefish Community Foundation Community Grant and donor advised funds, and as a sub-contractor to the City of Whitefish from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation in support of our development of the *Whitefish Area Water Resources Report: A Status of the Whitefish Lake Watershed and Surrounding Area*.

Through this deliverable, WLI will process and analyze data and information collected since 2007 from its core monitoring program and will assimilate historical data from project partners, resulting in a complete water quality status report, including trends, and a scientifically comprehensive foundation for long-term water quality monitoring of the Whitefish Lake Watershed & surrounding area. The report will include management recommendations through the development of a water quality improvement task item list. The report will be completed at the end of 2015 and distributed in early 2016. Our baseline monitoring program was supported by a grant from the Ila B. Dousman fund.

WLI and its Northwest Montana Lakes Volunteer Monitoring Network (NWMTLVMN) project partners—Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the Flathead Basin Commission (FBC)—received a grant from the Flathead National Forest Resource Advisory Committee (FNF RAC) which if congressionally funded, will support the NWMTLVMN program in 2015-2016. This program engages over 50 volunteer citizen scientists to gather important water quality data on 41 lakes in Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, and Missoula counties.

In support of our Community Stewardship and Education & Outreach work in 2014, WLI received support from the Cinnabar Foundation and the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Consortium for the production of our *Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail Discovery Guide* which was developed to meet Montana 5<sup>th</sup> grade science standards. These grants allowed us to provide a copy of the guide to every 5<sup>th</sup> grader at Whitefish Middle School. The Flathead Audubon Society provided grant funding for printing our *Bird Guide for the Living Wetlands Interpretive Nature Trail*, a beautiful, color guide for folks interested in ornithology in and around the wetland.

Also funded by the FNF RAC is the *Flathead Watershed Sourcebook Curriculum Development* project, for which WLI is a partner on the Flathead Community of Resource Educators (CORE) development committee. This project also enjoys support from FBC, the Flathead Conservation District, Flathead Lakers, Flathead National Forest, and the Sustainability Fund.

**Contracts** play a role in our revenue stream. Just completed this year were the final reports for the Bigfork Stormwater Project and Swan Lake Water Quality Investigation. Although these projects are not in our core geographic scope, they were initiated early in WLI's history when revenue was especially needed. We also contract with the City of Whitefish for objectives outlined in a Whitefish Aquatic Invasive Species Management Plan that is submitted by WLI to City Council each year.

We hope you've had the chance to join us at the **Whitefish Wine Auction**, our major annual fundraiser that supports our property/trail management of the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve and internal programming. This year's event on July 18th will be a Gala celebrating our 10 year anniversary. Through the negotiations that brokered the Viking Creek Development, we also receive an annual payment from lot owners in the Viking Creek sub-division to support property management and water quality.

In 2013, WLI's **Specialty License Plate** hit the market. Now established, the plate is a great way for the organization to receive passive income. Join us by displaying WLI's license plate on your vehicle.

**How you can help...**As you can see, we have creatively financed WLI through the years. However, the less staff time required to apply for, and administer grants and contracts, the more time we have to focus on our key programming areas of science, education and community stewardship. **Please talk to your friends and neighbors** about the importance of becoming WLI members. Together, we're investing in our future of clean water in Whitefish!

Fall Photos



WLI Environmental Scientist and Northwest Montana Lakes Volunteer Monitoring Network Coordinator Josh Gubits prepares equipment to sample one of the program lakes. Courtesy: Green Kat Photography.

All six Muldown Elementary second grade classes visited the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve for their annual pond unit. At the bug station, they got to catch aquatic insects. The kids also got a chance to see other animals that live in and near ponds, including; zooplankton, brook trout, and a long-toed salamander.



WLI partnered with the Whitefish High School GIS class and FREEFLOW program to conduct a stream resource inventory of six reaches on Cow Creek. Science teacher Eric Sawtelle assists students in identifying aquatic insects. Project partners intend to use the study results to guide restoration efforts.

Mike Koopal works with high school students to obtain cross sections and longitudinal profiles on Cow Creek. Courtesy: John Muhlfeld



A black bear crosses over a downed tree in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve. Many individual bears and mountain lions have been documented in photos.

A cow elk moves through the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve in the early evening hours. Photos have documented elk using the preserve as a rearing area.

## Whitefish Lake Institute Supporters

### Fellow (\$5,000 and above)

Collins, John & Anne	Goguen, Mike	Lane, Greg	Taylor, Don & Ruth
Fidelity National Timber Resources	Krummholz Fund	Shennan, Janna & Jamie	The Lodge at Whitefish Lake

### Guarantor (\$1,000 and above)

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### Visionary (\$500 and above)

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Christensen, Cora	Mobile Logistics Mapping	Paddlefish Sports	Stillwater Fish House
eBiz Services	Monzingo, Harold & Betty	Phillips Architecture	The Lodge at Whitefish Lake
Forestation, Inc.	Nelson's ACE Hardware	Sage & Cedar	Two Bear Air

### Current Grantors

Applied Materials	Cinnabar Foundation	Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	Whitefish Community Foundation Grants Fund
Cadeau Foundation	Ila B. Dousman Fund, Inc.		

### Current Research Funders

City of Whitefish	Flathead County	Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks	Swan Lakers
Flathead Basin Commission	Kootenai Lodge Estates	Plum Creek Timber Company	Whitefish County Water District



