



# LakeFront

Quarterly Newsletter of the Whitefish Lake Institute

Spring 2011

## Get Ready for the Second Annual



July 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>!

Planning for the Second Annual Whitefish Wine Auction is well under way, with some exciting additions since last year's successful inaugural event.

We will be returning to the beautiful setting at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake for this enjoyable and important fundraising event. We'll kick off Thursday afternoon at 4:00 pm in the Lakeside Tent with a new event, "Tasting with *Wine Spy*, Dan Vogel."

Guests will have an opportunity to learn or refresh their wine tasting skills while having the aromas, flavors, and characteristics of each wine described by a sommelier. This informal session promises to enliven your wine tasting and drinking experiences while increasing your overall knowledge of the elements that make great wine.

Additional wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, entertainment, and a special selection of Thursday-only raffle items will take place from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Don't miss this spectacular evening and the only opportunity during the two-day event to purchase wines directly from distributors.

Friday night's festivities get under way at 6:00 pm with hosted cocktails and bidding on a fabulous

assortment of Silent Auction and Raffle items. A four-course meal—each course paired with wines from our featured winery Foley Family Wines, will be prepared by the wonderfully creative chefs at The Lodge at Whitefish Lake. Back by popular demand, radio personality Ross Strauser of bigvalleyradio.com will emcee the event. Guests will once again be treated to an exciting and entertaining Live Auction with auctioneer Marc Vessar. With specialty wine lots, exciting adventures, unique art and other items to be auctioned, there will be something to delight and entice everyone (*continued page 3*).



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Protecting and improving the  
Whitefish, Montana area  
lake resources

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**Founded in 2005**

The Whitefish Lake Institute is committed to acquiring scientific research and engaging the local citizenry to protect and improve the Whitefish area lake resources of today, while providing a collective vision for tomorrow.

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**Mike Koopal, Editor**

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*Whitefish Lake with Big Mountain in the background*

*Courtesy: gravityshots.com*

**2011 Stewardship Award Winners**

The mother / daughter duo of Margaret Murdock and Sharlot Battin are the 2011 Whitefish Lake Institute Stewardship Award recipients under the category of *Lifetime Achievement*.

Margaret and Sharlot own about 250 acres of wetland habitat near the shores of Whitefish Lake and have long been water quality advocates. Their property is adjacent to the 30 acres of wetlands owned by the Whitefish Lake Institute. In the 1980's, long before the concept of conservation easements became popular, they placed their property in an easement through the Nature Conservancy. The easement restricts development but allows for traditional land use activities like timber harvest and agricultural practices. As Margaret put it, "We don't see this land as a commodity. We see it as something to be respected."

Through the years, Margaret and Sharlot have planted hundreds of trees and shrubs to provide wildlife habitat and to protect water quality. They have also provided browse protection to existing plants by fencing areas or by caging individual plants.

Keen observers of the natural world, Margaret and Sharlot have documented the wildlife that lives or moves through their property. During their regular hikes, they have seen mountain lions, grizzlies, black bears, moose, deer, turkeys, owls, eagles, hawks, not to mention sensitive species like the LeConte's Sparrow and Small Yellow Ladies Slipper.

The two women come from a matriarchal lineage of hard working, visionary women. Margaret's mother, Bertha Reich, homesteaded in what amounted to nothing more than a tent that shielded her and her brother from the cold, windy eastern Montana winters near Winifred (Margaret and Sharlot also placed that 200 acre property into an easement).

After marrying, Bertha and her husband, Hugo, bought the Whitefish property from George and Minnie Baker in 1930. Margaret likes the idea that "starting with Minnie, a man has never held the deed to this property." The men did, however, work the land. Hugo raised oats, timothy and clover for livestock, something the Baker brothers had started in order to feed the horses for their logging operations.

Margaret retired in 1985 after 36 years of teaching in Columbia Falls. Sharlot makes shoes for Broadway productions. She recently retired after 25 years as an Instructor of footwear design, pattern making and construction at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Congratulations Margaret and Sharlot, we appreciate all that you do for the resource!



*Margaret Murdock and Sharlot Battin*

## WLI Welcomes Summer Intern

Leif Castren is Whitefish Lake Institute's new intern for the 2011 summer season.

Leif is a 2010 graduate of Flathead High School where he graduated as a valedictorian. He has just completed his first year at Middlebury College in Middlebury, Vermont. Middlebury attracted Leif because of its strong Environmental Studies department, the flexibility that their liberal arts curriculum allows, and the opportunity to utilize a strong language program to prepare for study abroad. At this point, Leif is planning to take his junior year of college to travel abroad and study Marine Biology at the University Austral in Chile. During his freshman year Leif studied a variety of subjects including Geology, Biology, and Anthropology along with courses in Human Ecology, Hydrology, Mountain Culture and Literature, and Human Body and Earth. Leif has yet to commit to a major but is hoping to focus in Environmental Biology or Geology.

Leif has lived in the Flathead since the summer of 2006 when he moved to the valley from southwest Washington. He was an active distance runner in Montana all through high school and has continued to run at the college level in Vermont. During the summer Leif spends his free time climbing peaks in Glacier National Park, hiking in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and competing in road races and triathlons around the Valley.



*Leif on a hiking trip in Glacier National Park.*

### ***(Wine Auction continued from page 1)***

Proceeds from the 2011 wine auction will assist the Whitefish Lake Institute in fulfilling its mission in the following ways: **Phase II Interpretive Nature Trail Construction** in the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve, which is owned and managed by the Whitefish Lake Institute; **Scientific data collection** on Whitefish Lake and its tributaries which provides resource managers with important information used in their decision making process; **Educational programs** for both school children and adults; and **Community stewardship** of Whitefish water resources.

Join your friends and neighbors for the premier summer wine event in the Flathead Valley and support the important work of the Whitefish Lake Institute.

#### Ticket prices:

Thursday	7/21 Only	\$30 per person
Friday	7/22 Only	\$75 per person or \$500 Private Table for 8
Both Nights		\$85 per person or \$600 for all Thursday and Friday events with private table for 8 on Friday

Tickets can be purchased online at [www.whitefishwineauction.org](http://www.whitefishwineauction.org) or by calling the Whitefish Lake Institute at 406.862.4327.

#### *Additional Ticket Outlets in Whitefish:*

Boat Club Restaurant, The Lodge at Whitefish Lake  
Crush Wine Bar, above The Toggery in downtown Whitefish  
Whitefish Chamber of Commerce



## WLI Trains Citizen Scientists

The Northwest Montana Lakes Volunteer Monitoring Network (NWMTLVMN) 2011 field season is now officially underway, and to kick it off, WLI hosted two trainings last month where volunteers learned how to collect baseline water quality data, conduct surveys for aquatic invasive species and use the new website database.

The NWMTLVMN is a volunteer program funded through Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Flathead Basin Commission, and the Whitefish Lake Institute. Volunteers that participate in the program collect data on 40 lakes throughout northwest Montana.

The chilly conditions didn't stop volunteers from attending the first of three spring trainings, the first being held at City Beach in Whitefish. Volunteers sipped coffee and snacked on delicious treats graciously donated by Montana Coffee traders and Simply Sweet Baking Company while NWMTLVMN coordinator Josh Gubits presented information and fielded questions. All new volunteers were given a Secchi disk and measuring tape to test for lake transparency, a thermometer, and an artificial substrate for monitoring the presence of zebra and quagga mussels.

Most of the people who attended the trainings are new to the program, and have taken on lakes such as Flathead, Lindbergh, Blaine, Little Bitterroot, Ashley, Sophie and Glen. Volunteers seemed most interested in how they could help to prevent the spread of invasive animals and plants in Montana. There is still one training left and will be held again at City Beach in Whitefish from 10-12 on Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup>. Please contact the WLI office to sign up for this final spring training.



*Josh Gubits leads volunteer training at City Beach.*

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## WLI Coordinates Geotoursim Groups

The Whitefish Lake Institute (WLI) has developed a unique partnership with the Rapid City, South Dakota-based Educational Travel Institute of America (ETIA) to coordinate local Road Scholar (also known as ElderHostel) programs. Through the relationship with ETIA, WLI provides a local coordinator to plan and execute Road Scholar lifelong learning programs in the Whitefish area and in Glacier National Park. The coordinator schedules program itineraries; books hotel, meeting, and dining facilities; arranges transportation and entry into parks and other attractions; and engages local talent to lead programs. Road Scholar—the non-profit leader in educational travel—has been producing educational tour programs for seniors since 1975, and now has almost 8,000 programs in all 50 states and over 90 countries. The coordinator position is held by the WLI Science and Education Director who is responsible for developing and implementing a number of educational programs for the organization.

Through the Whitefish and Glacier National Park-centered programs, more than 700 visitors will be coming to the area, bringing revenue to hotels, lodges, restaurants, transportation companies, and downtown businesses where participants spend free time. The program supports the fundamentals of *geotourism*: tourism that sustains and enhances the geographical character of a place, such as its cultural heritage, natural resources, and the well-being of its residents. The ETIA/WLI partnership enables the seasonal employment of numerous program leaders and field instructors. Participants will leave the summer program with a better understanding of the geophysical and cultural histories of the area, a first-hand knowledge of its habitats, species, and some of the challenges facing resource managers.

Whitefish Lake Institute will also be hosting Road Scholar participants for Friday morning classes throughout the summer. WLI staff will focus on introducing participants to lake ecology and the effects of species introductions on native species and habitats. They will also bring class participants to the Averill's Viking Creek Wetland Preserve which is owned and managed by the Whitefish Lake Institute.

## Whitefish Lake Institute Membership

**Research Guarantor (\$1,000 and above)**

Jim & Jo-Ann Armstrong - Paradise Valley, AZ  
 Rick & Alicia Blake - Whitefish, MT  
 John & Anne Collins - Whitefish, MT  
 Ila Dousman Fund - Whitefish, MT  
 Greg & Susan Fletcher - Whitefish, MT  
 Bill Foley - Whitefish, MT  
 Bill & Ann Jones - Whitefish, MT  
 LaChance Builders, Inc., Tom LaChance - Whitefish, MT  
 Greg Lane - Whitefish, MT  
 River Design Group, John Muhlfield - Whitefish, MT  
 Tom & Teresa Quinn - Whitefish, MT  
 Joseph & Beverly Raudabaugh - Lake Forest, IL  
 Scott & Cindy Schmid - Portland, OR  
 Mike & Marie Shaw - Whitefish, MT  
 InvesTech Research, Jim & Lisa Stack - Whitefish, MT  
 Plum Creek- Columbia Falls, MT  
 Don & Ruth Taylor  
 Dan Weinberg - Whitefish, MT  
 Steve & Ardy Whisler - Whitefish, MT

**Lake Visionary (\$500)**

Richard & Carol Atkinson - Whitefish, MT  
 Dick & Sandra Boyce - Portola Valley, CA  
 Mark & Connie Cowett - Bozeman, MT  
 Barbara Greene - Calgary, AB  
 Ruth Leonard - Whitefish, MT  
 Lion Mountain Homeowners Association, - Whitefish, MT  
 Lion Mountain, Inc., Tim Grattan - Whitefish, MT  
 Ched & Rebecca Lyman - Whitefish, MT  
 Mark Mance & Katherine Callahan - Whitefish, MT  
 River Design Group- Whitefish, MT  
 Peter & Christine Stanley - Whitefish, MT  
 Rockpoint Group, LLC, Bill & Dori Walton - Jacksonville, FL  
 Whitefish Credit Union, Jim Kenyon - Whitefish, MT

**Lake Benefactor (\$250)**

Charlie & Susan Abell - Whitefish, MT  
 Dan Averill - Bigfork, MT  
 Jim Berry - Kalispell, MT  
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 Gene Hedman - Whitefish, MT  
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**Lake Leader (\$100)**

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 Peter & Cheri Aronsson - Whitefish, MT  
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 Luther & Dorothy Campbell - Whitefish, MT  
 Doug Chadwick & Karen Reeves - Whitefish, MT  
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 Todd & Susan Flynn - Oro Valley, AZ  
 Friends of Blanchard Lake- Whitefish, MT  
 OTB Designworks, LLC, Chuck Gailey - Whitefish, MT  
 Getter Properties, William Getter - Sheridan, WY  
 Forestoration, Inc., Greg Gunderson - Whitefish, MT  
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 Whitefish Lake Restaurant, Doug Reed - Whitefish, MT  
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- Research Guarantor \$1,000+
- Lake Visionary \$500
- Lake Benefactor \$250
- Lake Leader \$100
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- Frank Morrison, Jr. Scholarship Fund

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Whitefish Lake Institute · 635 Denver Street · Whitefish, MT 59937

**Visit us at [www.whitefishlake.org](http://www.whitefishlake.org)**

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