

# From Perry Thomas the President

Kudos to all the contributing authors who generated timely content for this issue as summer 2020 brings new challenges for communities working together to manage lakes. Given the back-to-basics theme, I also want to call attention to the challenge of communicating scientific concepts to public audiences.



Using familiar metaphors is one way of introducing complex management topics. A good example is the use of preventive health metaphors by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) to justify different approaches taken to restore and manage Florida's Lake Apopka. Erich Marzolf, director of SJRWMD's division of water and land resources, uses the terms "diet" and "exercise" to explain components of lake restoration.

Specifically, Dr. Marzolf describes work in Lake Apopka's watershed to slow nutrient runoff as "diet," and efforts to deplete nutrients already in the lake as "exercise." One component of Lake Apopka's exercise regime is harvesting gizzard shad, a native fish that often overpopulates eutrophic lakes. These bottom feeders disturb the lake's sediments, thereby facilitating release of legacy nutrients which feed algae that reduce water transparency. The annual selective harvest of a million pounds of gizzard shad not only removes nutrients accumulated in the fish themselves, but also reduces internal nutrient recycling and improves water clarity essential to achieving the goal of recovering native submerged aquatic vegetation.

I note that Florida is not alone in using nutrition metaphors to communicate lake management concepts. For example, the New York State Federation of Lake Associations recently published *Diet for a Small Lake: The Expanded Guide to New York State Lake and Watershed Management, Second Edition*. This soup-to-nuts lake management reference is sure to be a bestseller among lake communities in New York and beyond.

Here, in the pages that follow, authors consider different approaches to providing preventive health care for lakes and highlight multiple tools available for addressing challenges in lake watersheds and the lakes they feed. I also recommend EPA's newly released *How's My Waterway 2.0* as a good general source of information about lake health, including comparisons with national assessment data. If your organization is just beginning to plan actions to reduce nutrient runoff from a lake's watershed, Stroud Water

Research Center's *Model My Watershed* is another useful tool.

Finally, when it comes to developing an integrated diet and exercise plan for your lake, consider consulting one of NALMS's [subject matter experts](#). Many thanks to all NALMS members and partners who continue this work together and who find creative ways of communicating what the lakes we love need.

**Perry Thomas** holds a Ph.D. in biology with a focus on aquatic ecology. She taught ecology and worked as a college administrator until 2015 when her career path took a turn into state government. After working with the Lakes Program of the Vermont Watershed Management Division, she now collaborates with environmental scientists in the Kentucky Watershed Management Branch. She feels fortunate to collaborate with thoughtful, dedicated colleagues – many of whom share her passion for paddling. 🛶

## UPCOMING IN LAKELINE – FALL 2020

### NALMS at 40

This issue will include some articles related to the evolution of NALMS and lake management over the last 40 years. We would like to include an array of personal stories from members of NALMS (both long-time and new) about what NALMS means to them. Articles on the evolution of lake management, and in particular some articles on how federal Section 314 funding was useful in the past, and the gaps it left behind when funding for that program was terminated. How did you adapt, or not adapt to that loss of funding on the state level? Case studies, data driven information, and/or anecdotal information is all useful. Also, it would be nice to have some short articles on how NALMS could and should grow and evolve for the next 40 years (what do we do well, what do we need to tweak or add).

Articles can be emailed to Amy Smagula, LakeLine Editor at [LakeLine@nalms.org](mailto:LakeLine@nalms.org). The deadline for the fall issue is August 31. 🛶