The purpose of the Friends of the Boyne River is to improve and conserve the environmental health and recreational quality of the Boyne River and its watershed.

Winter 2017 Boyne River Bulletin

Boyne River Hydro Facility

In October 2016, a dam flood gate on the Boyne River malfunctioned causing flooding and then a water level drop. The FoBR received some phone calls and emails from concerned citizens wondering what happened. In a letter from Boyne Mountain, President/General Manager Ed Grice explained the problem.

“Due to the difficulty we were experiencing with the seals on the flood gate at the Boyne River Hydro Facility, we have had a new gate manufactured over the past couple of months.”

“On Wednesday afternoon 10/12/16 we had the new gate installed and the temporary gate removed, the new gate sealed and the facility operated normally. On Friday 10/14/16 the rebuilt electric winch for the new gate was reinstalled and tested. During testing while in the up position the new gate became stuck open approximately 18” allowing more water than necessary at the time to flow downstream. On Saturday morning 10/15/16 our staff were able to get the gate dislodged and resealed and our staff continued to monitor the facility to insure the flow of the river was maintained while the 80 acre pond level was reestablished.”

“We will be working with our hydro engineer and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to modify the new gate so it will open and close without further issues.”

Heather Hettinger, DNR Fisheries Division, reiterated the gate problem in her comments on Michigan-Sportsman.com/forum/threads/dam-failure-on-the-boyne. She added:

“The staff at Boyne are aware of multiple erosion issues above and below the dam that will be addressed, and are concerned about the fish population issue as well. The last time my crew surveyed the Boyne below the dam was 2012, so we have recent data to compare it. The Boyne will be on the 2017 work schedule so they can get in there and look at the impacts to the fish community. We stock both steelhead and browns here each year, it is popular with anglers, and the natural reproduction is strong.”

Mr. Grice toured the FoBR board through the hydro facility and dam, and offered another tour to FoBR members.

Saturday, April 15, 10 am
Rain or shine. No reservation required. Meet on Dam Road at the River. Be prepared to walk .25 miles if parking at the dam is full.
Join us for these guest speakers at the Boyne District Library community room.
 Refreshments provided. Bring a friend. No reservation needed.

Wed. March 8, 7-8:30pm  Dr. Grenetta Thomassey, The Septic Question
In Michigan, after septic systems are sited and installed, there is no legal requirement to ever inspect them again. Unfortunately, these systems typically only last 25-30 years and most areas in our region will never connect to public sewers. How does it affect our ground water? Dr. Thomassey, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council Program Director, will discuss potential solutions.

Wed. April 12, 6-7:30pm*  Doc Fletcher, PBS-featured Michigan author
Doc shares stories from his newest book, Canoeing & Kayaking College Campuses in Michigan. The program will end with a drawing for a free canoe or kayak day trip down one of Michigan rivers, donated by various canoe & kayak liveries. “You don't have to be a paddling enthusiast to enjoy the program, but you may become one by the time the evening ends!”

The FoBR is co-sponsoring this event with the Boyne District Library. For more on Doc Fletcher, visit canoeingmichiganrivers.com. *Note the early starting time

Wed. June 14, 7-8:30pm  Gary Osterbeck, Boyne River Photographer
Gary Osterbeck has undertaken the formidable task of creating photographic slide shows, complete with music, of the entire Boyne River. The project was completed in four phases: the North Branch, Moyer Creek (a tributary to the South Branch), the South Branch and an overview Boyne River. The first three phases are posted on YouTube where they can be viewed and enjoyed year around. Gary will debut the final phase for us on the large screen. Sit back, relax and take in the sights and sounds of our celebrated river.

Saturday, May 20, 10am-Noon, Boyne River Nature Area
Spring Bird Migration Walk with Mary Trout
We enjoyed Mary’s fall bird migration and owl presentation, so we invited her back this spring! If you haven’t met her, this is your opportunity to learn everything about birding. She will give an introduction to spring bird migration, then lead a short walk on the upper trail (.25 mile). Bring binoculars or borrow from her. She will have field guide examples. Mary loves birds and organizations dedicated to the environment. She’s a member of the Petoskey Audubon Society, Michigan Audubon Society, American Birding Association and is involved with the new Mackinaw City Raptor Fest, among others. Your family and friends are invited. No charge. In case of inclement weather, come to the Boyne District Library community room.

The nature area is in the Boyne City business park. On M-75 S., enter the business park at the Moll Dr. entrance. Turn right at the stop sign on Lexamar Dr. The nature area pavilion and parking lot are on the left.

All are invited to enjoy the rain garden and walk the boardwalks down to the river. Note that there are no restroom facilities at the pavilion.
Free Art in Nature Classes
for Kids
June-July-August

FoBR will offer free nature-based art classes for children 5 to 12 years old at the Boyne River Nature Area. Candy Greene and Suzie Dickow, teachers on FoBR Board of Directors, will teach from 10am-Noon. Parents are asked to be present for the classes. For more information, call Candy 231-582-2434 and watch the website www.boyneriver.org.

Monday, June 26  Environmental Curiosities
A guide to what's in the environment and answering questions like, “What's this for?” and “How can I use this?” Topics cover identifying edible plants and medicinal plants. Art project to follow.

Monday, July 10  Helping the Boyne River
Kids clean up and learn to reinvent and reuse along the river. Discussions cover recycling and composting, and includes a craft project.

Monday, August 7  Art in Nature
Participants take a nature walk along trails and complete an art project with found items.

The Boyne River Nature Area is in the Boyne City Business Park on M-75 S. Enter on Moll Dr., turn right at the stop sign. The nature area pavilion and parking lot are on the left. In case of inclement weather, a class may be cancelled. Note that there are no restrooms at the nature area.

Spring Stream Monitoring, 9am-Noon, Boyne River
"Netters" and “spotters” collect “water bugs” and data to determine the relative health of the Boyne River, locate problem areas and establish base levels. Netters in waders scoop up rocks and natural debris, then dump their catch in trays where spotters collect small wildlife with tweezers. The macroinvertebrates are collected in jars and given to the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council for later identification.

We need volunteers to expand our two teams. Training provided. To volunteer (teens encouraged), call FoBR member Adam Kennedy at 231-330-2923 or contact Matt Claugherty, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, 231-347-1181 or matt@watershedcouncil.org. Formal training offered on Saturday, May 13.

Michigan Free Fishing Weekend  Take someone fishing.

Special River Cleanup: Water Balloons, Old City Park
Please join us to walk the river and paddle from East St. to the river mouth, collecting July 4th celebration debris, particularly water balloons from the popular raft race. As stewards of the Boyne River, we make a difference by removing balloons that break apart and are mistakenly eaten by fish and waterfowl. They can die when latex gets lodged in their digestive systems.

Bring rakes, kayaks, nets, gardening gloves, bags. Please encourage friends and family to use water shooters instead of balloons on the 4th. Water balloons are litter. Hopefully we won’t need a clean up next year.

March 1
Scholarship Applications Due

Are you studying for a career in marine biology, conservation, watershed management, water quality, fisheries and wildlife, DNR related fields or similar subjects?

Have you lived in the Boyne River watershed area or Charlevoix County for at least one year?

You may eligible for an FoBR $1,000 scholarship.

Visit boyneriverinc.com and click on About Us, then Education Scholarships for more information and the application form.
Managing Purple Loosestrife with Beetles

Purple loosestrife is a very hardy invasive species which rapidly degrades wetlands, diminishing their value for wildlife habitat. Wetlands are the most biologically diverse, productive component of our ecosystem. Hundreds of species of plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, fish and amphibians rely on healthy wetland habitats for their survival. However, when purple loosestrife gets a foothold, the habitat where fish and wildlife feed, seek shelter, reproduce and rear young, quickly becomes choked under a sea of purple flowers.

In June, we hope the invasive loosestrife will meet its natural deterrent, *Galerucella Calmariensis*. These are beetles that FoBR will order and purchase through the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council’s invasives elimination program, if a new source can be found. The leaf-eaters seriously affect growth and seed production by feeding on the leaves and new shoot growth of purple loosestrife plants. The size of a peppercorn, the beetles will arrive in early June in a dormant state for immediate release on Boyne River’s purple loosestrife.

Interested in purchasing beetles for loosestrife on your shoreline or wetland? Contact Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council for quantity and cost details. For more on beetles and purple loosestrife: www.watershedcouncil.org/purple-loosestrife.

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Boyne River Nature Area Tree Dedication

On September 10, 2016 young native trees were dedicated to 1998 FoBR co-founder Tom Sheets and to long time member Ruth Sheets at the Boyne River Nature Area.

Tom’s Princeton Elm is resistant to Dutch Elm disease so restoring a native tree that faced extinction seemed a good way to honor Tom.

Ruth’s Pagoda Dogwood is an elegant, tiny and resilient tree, befitting of her. The trees are marked with plaques.

We gratefully acknowledge the Sheets family and their dedication to the betterment of the Boyne River.

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FoBR Annual Meeting, Picnic Potluck and Officer Elections

Please mark your calendars, then join us at the Old City Park Pavilion to meet, greet, vote and eat!

Wed. August 9, 5:30-7:30pm

Sat. August 19, 9am-noon

Annual 6River Sweep Meet at Veterans Park boat launch

As part of the national river sweep, join volunteers on six rivers to clean up, pick up and tidy up our favorite rivers: Bear, Boyne, Jordan, Maple, Pigeon and Sturgeon.

Walk the river banks or paddle from Dam Road into town. Bring your own boat, pfd and paddle. We provide garbage bags and dispose of the collection. Organizers of the 6RiverSweep typically hold an event following the sweep. Watch our website for details. Contact Adam Kennedy, Boyne River sweep leader, if you have questions 231-330-2923.
In a united effort to stop invasive plant species that are reaching Michigan, over 30 groups are supporting a program to collect invasives data through the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network (MISIN), led by the MSU Dept. of Entomology.

Early detection and rapid response is critical to controlling invasives with prompt and coordinated eradication. You can participate using a smartphone app to report invasives. The app also helps with identification. Register through the App Store or www.misin.msu.edu/about/. Creating an account will allow you to report invasive species observations and create custom email alerts of new sightings in your area.

Call Charlevoix & Emmet Counties project leader Jackie Pilette, Emmet Conservation Dist. 231-439-8977 for more about our 4-county service area, Charlevoix, Antrim, Emmet and Kalkaska (CAKE).

Giant Knotweed, Giant Hogweed, Garlic Mustard, Purple Loosestrife and European Frogbit are among the most serious threats to our state.

Giant Knotweed  This 12’ perennial shrub grows in a wide range of habitats, especially stream banks. With large heart-shaped leaves, bamboo-like stems, and greenish-white flowers, it is native to Asia where it can grow through lava. It damages foundations and driveways and has been found in the Boyne City area. Treatment is difficult. It sprouts vigorously after cutting and tiny fragments of roots and branches will sprout and form new colonies.

Using both mechanical and chemical methods is the most effective form of knotweed control, particularly for small patches or sensitive areas. Please call the CAKE office above if you discover knotweed. More about knotweed at michigan.gov/documents/dnr/knotweed.

Be a Volunteer Scientist: Text water levels
The FoBR crowd hydrology team installed five water level monitoring gauges on the Boyne River in May 2014, readable from the river bank.

Be a volunteer scientist by reporting water levels via text when you paddle, fish or walk the river.

FoBR Volunteer
The FoBR runs on the energy of volunteers.
This happy volunteer helped her grandpa Adam Kennedy replace a faded FoBR sign at Old City Park.

Adam’s Boyne
River Kayaking Journal: 01-21-17
45 degrees and sunny, so Michael Ryan and I went for it. The water was high from the recent warm weather snow melt but we took our time, taking a few photos. First we heard it, then we saw a robin! Strange but true. A kingfisher, two swans and some ducks were at the millpond. We paddled into Lake Charlevoix but due to lake ice, went back up stream through the tubes to take out.
Note: I’ve since learned that it’s not unusual to see non-migrating robins. Apparently some robins are snow birds.

Additional monthly journal entries at www.boyneriveriver.org
Thank you for renewing your annual FoBR membership

If you haven’t already done so, this is a friendly reminder and we hope you will continue. Memberships help support river education and protection activities.

Annual memberships began in January 2017. It’s never too late! A renewal form is also on the website boyneriver.org or call Candy Greene 231-582-2434, FoBR Membership. Thank you.

Friends of the Boyne River is a 501(C)3 non-profit organization, operated 100% by volunteers.

We email event reminders/updates to our members. If you would like to receive them, make sure we have your email address. Email boyneriverinc@gmail.com or call Candy.

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Thanks to You, “Pills in the POD” Successful

Pharmaceuticals pose a threat to aquatic life if they are released into lakes and streams. Harmful chemicals can leach from landfills and pass through wastewater treatment plants untouched. Proper disposal is key to protecting aquatic life.

The POD Program (Prescription and Over-the-Counter Drug Drop-Off) is a medication drug take back initiative that provides a convenient way to properly dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Charlevoix County Sheriff Charles Vondra said that in Charlevoix County alone, 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of pharmaceuticals are collected annually and taken to an EPA licensed facility for incineration.

Permanent collection drop boxes are located throughout Northern Michigan including the Boyne City and East Jordan Police Departments, and at the Sheriff’s offices in Charlevoix and on Beaver Island. For more on the POD program: www.watershedcouncil.org/pharmaceuticals-in-our-waters and http://www.pillsinthepod.com/.

2017 FoBR Board of Directors

Adam Kennedy, President 231-330-2923 Marie Sheets, Vice President 231-675-3344
Nancy Cunningham, Secretary 231-582-9373 Bob Greene, Treasurer 231-582-2324
Mark Contrucci, Director Sheri Rhoads, Director Suzie Dickow, Director
Michael Ryan, Director Mike Durbin, Director Ed Strzelinski, Director

We are your volunteer Board of Directors. Do you have questions? Ideas? Want to volunteer? Please give us a call. The FoBR Board meets 4th Wednesdays, 6pm, Boyne District Library.

The Boyne River Bulletin is produced twice a year. Sheri Rhoads, Editor
Email comments and suggestions to boyneriverinc@gmail.com
Moments from the FoBR
2016 Christmas Party
“boyneriver.org”

Learn about FoBR projects, activities, events, newsletters, links, information about the Boyne River and river wildlife, and more at the Friends of the Boyne River website.

We are fortunate to have volunteers who keep the FoBR engine running. The website gives us the means to keep our membership updated and the public aware of the positive environmental work being done to preserve and protect the Boyne River.

A Boyne River visitor, the Great Blue Heron

**Boyne River Trivia**

Beautiful blue and black **damselflies** are commonly seen hovering over the Boyne River.

Similar to dragonflies but smaller (1"-2"), their bodies are slimmer and most species fold the wings along the body when at rest.

They are predatory, catching flies, mosquitoes, and other small insects.

*Their presence on a body of water indicates that it is relatively unpolluted.*

Friends of the Boyne River
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