



Spring 2018 Newsletter

NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

Leaving a Lasting Legacy for the Northwoods

More than a Memory... Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area



NWLT's latest conservation land donation project features the Jerry Cary Sanctuary on Van Vliet Lake in Vilas County.

More than a memory, this land is now a lasting, living legacy. The Jerry Cary Sanctuary sign indicates just how special the Northwoods Land Trust's newest conservation land donation is to the donor, Paulette Cary.

Paulette and her late husband Jerry, of Oak Park, Illinois, truly enjoyed this scenic parcel on the north shore of Van Vliet Lake. She has now donated this 2.4-acre parcel in the town of Presque Isle in Vilas County in Jerry's memory.

According to Paulette, "ever since the day we were married, my husband said 'someday I'd like to have a cabin up in the northwoods.' Jerry was a medical equipment salesman, and the northwoods was part of his territory. He was very patient. Every time he drove up that way, he looked for a piece of property that he thought would be just what he wanted. He wanted it to be very solitary. He didn't want to be part of a big development, he wanted something very rustic."

"His father, Charles Cary, loved going up to the northwoods fishing when he was young," Paulette related. "The Cary family originally came from around Cary, Illinois. Jerry was born and raised in Syracuse, New York. Charles was an avid fisherman, and Jerry inherited that from his Dad."

"When Jerry came back to live in Chicago, the first thing he wanted to do was go back to where his father used to fish in the northwoods," said Paulette. "He had some great buddies - all single guys at that time. They used to go up every summer for a couple of weeks fishing. They would all rent a cabin,

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MISSION:

The Northwoods Land Trust (NWLT) promotes conservation by private landowners of natural shorelands, woodlands, wetlands, and other natural resources as public benefits for present and future generations in Vilas, Oneida, Forest, Florence, Iron, Price and northern Langlade Counties.



The accreditation seal recognizes land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

NORTHWOODS LAND TRUST

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Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area - *continued*

usually in Eagle River, and they would fish together. The northwoods had a lot of great memories for him.”

Paulette recalled that “one day in 1977, Jerry came home from a trip and said ‘I think I’ve found a place.’ We went up and looked at it. There was a lovely little cabin. It was probably built in the 1950s, very rustic and right on a great fishing lake. It was not a log cabin, but it was a rustic wood cabin. It had two little bedrooms, a kitchen/living room area, and indoor plumbing. We bought it lock-stock-and-barrel, including all the furniture and a row boat. They left everything as part of the purchase, so it was a ready made cabin.”

“Jerry would go up a lot more than I did,” she continued, “because he would be in that territory periodically. But we always went up spring, summer and fall. The cabin was well used for a long time.”

“We had very dear friends, Roger and Laura Fuelster, who would also go up for a month all by themselves,” she said. “They have both passed, but they were great outdoors people and loved to fish.”

“It was very simple living – no television,” she commented. “We had a radio, that was it. For a while we didn’t even have a telephone. Because my parents were elderly and I was afraid to be away from home too long without being in contact, eventually we got a phone. We had a large screened-in porch facing the lake where we slept. We never slept inside. That screened-in porch was the best thing we ever did.”

“My husband was a fisherman, and we were out every day fishing,” she remembered. “Jerry was always fishing for musky, and I was always fishing for walleye. In all the years that we went up there, he caught his dream musky once. I was not there with him at the time, so he ended up bringing it home so I could see it. It was truly a great accomplishment in his mind.”

“It is a very weedy lake, which of course makes it a nice fishing lake,” she said. “I remember having problems just getting our boat out of the cove because the weeds would be so heavy. Ross and Nelda Grieser were our neighbors just down the road a piece. They were just nice people. We would always look out for each other. Ross was an extraordinary fisherman, but he never gave up

the secrets of where he fished!”

“My husband and I, and his brother and wife, planted about 600 red pine on that property,” noted Paulette. “My husband wanted a heavy forest around the cabin. We bought seedlings from the state and planted red pines up the hill from the cabin to the road.”

“The wildlife was magnificent,” she stated. “On the side deck where we used to sit and read, it was like the Animal Channel. We could sit there and the deer would come to us. We had black bear on many occasions, red fox, eagles of course, and just a wonderful array of birds. We always had a bird feeder out.”

One of the significant conservation values of the property is that it is located across the road from, and helps to buffer, the Van Vliet Hemlocks State Natural Area (*see the Van Vliet Hemlocks sidebar on page 6*).

A small parking area and trailhead for a series of looping public hiking trails is located just east of the Cary property off of West Van Vliet Road.

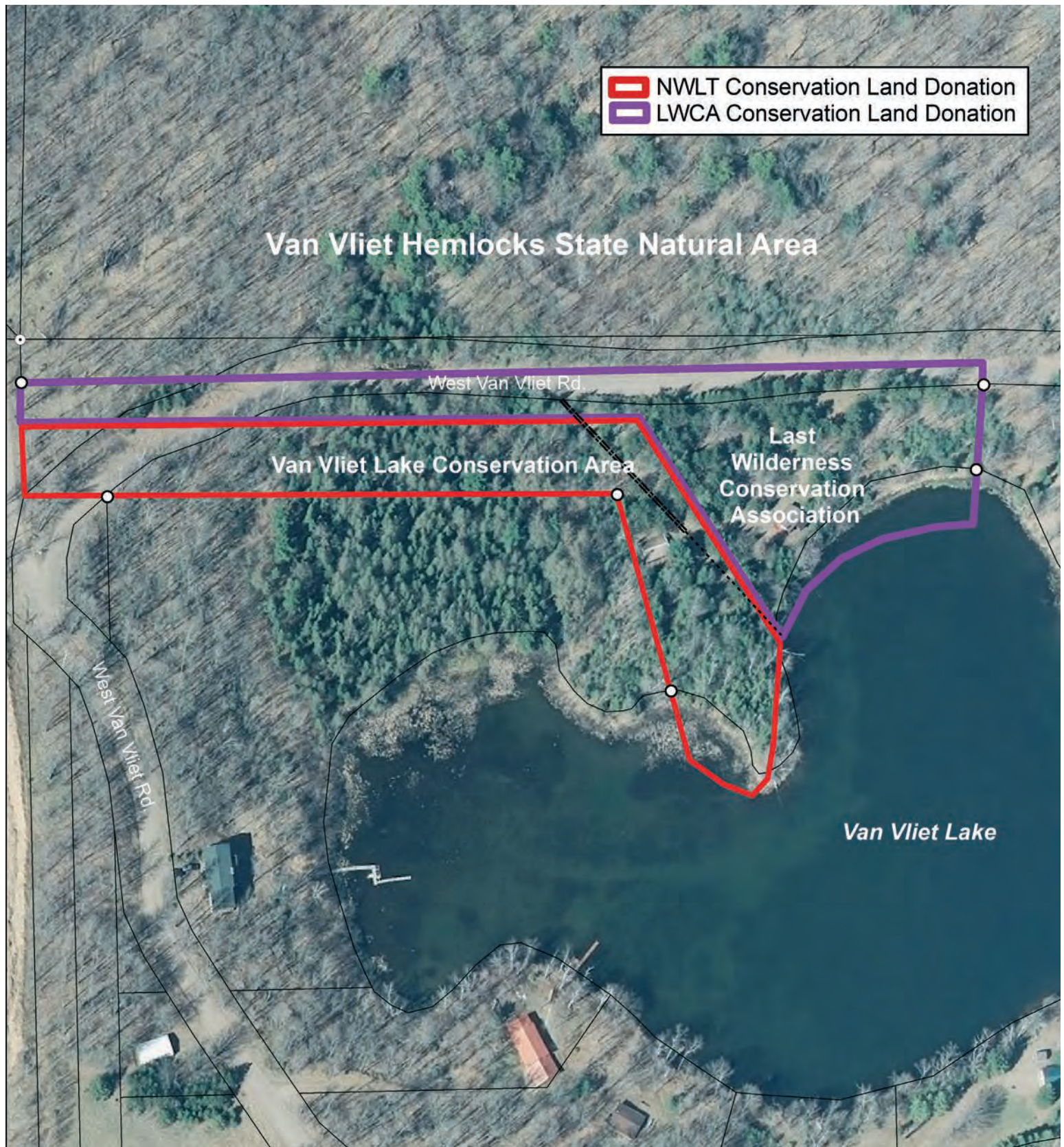
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“It was a beautiful, quiet, serene environment.”
- Paulette Cary



Paulette Cary with husband Jerry (standing left) and his brother David by the entrance to the Van Vliet Lake property.

Map of the Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area



This drawing is not a survey, and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, information and data used for reference purposes only. Parcel lines are approximate only. GIS data source: Vilas County Mapping Department.

Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area
Town of Presque Isle, Vilas County
Northwoods Land Trust, Inc.
2015 Digital Orthophoto Map
T43N - R6E - Section 21

N↑

NWLT Annual Report of Contributions Received in Fiscal Year 2017

Our sincerest Thank You to all of our continuing members and contributors, and welcome to our new members and supporters!

New Conservation Land Donors

8.7 acres Estate of Sybil & Howard Holtzer
2.4 acres Paulette Cary

Government & Foundation Grants

\$119,500 Caerus Foundation
\$100,000 Anonymous - IRA distribution
\$33,153 DNR Lake Protection Grant V
\$22,339 DNR Lake Protection Grant VI
\$25,000 John C. Bock Foundation
\$15,000 Lux Foundation Inc.
\$6,500 Modestus Bauer Foundation
\$4,000 Land Trust Alliance
\$3,000 American Natural Heritage Fdn. & Mueller Family Charitable Trust
\$2,312 EarthShare Employee Giving Campaign
\$2,000 Coles Family Foundation
\$1,669 Charles A. & Ida C. Sanders Northwoods Memorial Fund of the Natural Resources Foundation of WI
\$1,100 Wisconsin Land Fund of the Greater Green Bay Community Foundation
\$1,100 Kimberly Clark Foundation - Employee Giving Program
\$1,000 Charles & Carol James Fund - Greater Milwaukee Foundation
\$500 Ron & Winnie Krueger Fund - Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin
\$500 Patterson Family Foundation
\$500 Butternut Franklin Lakes Foundation
\$350 River Valley Bank Foundation
\$40 Amazon Smile Foundation

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Continued next page

NWLT Annual Report of Contributions Received in Fiscal Year 2017

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In Kind Gifts & Contributions

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workshop
Pat Marinac & Sterling
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books
Vilas County Land & Water
Conservation Department -
publications
David & Kathy Noel -
display materials

Please let us know if we've made an error so we can correct it in our next newsletter. We truly appreciate your support!

Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area - *continued*

Paulette was born and raised in Oak Park, Illinois. “We have been living in this house since 1973,” she said. “I was in advertising for many years. Now I am retired, but I still do commercial work with voice-overs and as an actress.”

“After my husband died in 1984, I didn’t go up quite as often,” reflected Paulette.

“I started to realize that what drew me there was my husband’s love of being up there. That is where he wanted to retire, but Jerry died of a heart attack in 1984 at 43. It was a total shock, but there is no doubt in my mind where he wanted to be. That is why this sanctuary land will always be his.”

“I felt an emotional attachment to the property,” she noted, “but I realized that I was not using the cabin except maybe once or twice a year. Eventually I decided that a better use of the property would be to preserve it in remembrance of him.”

In 2007, Paulette donated the 1.96-acre cabin parcel with 345 feet of frontage on Van Vliet Lake to the Last Wilderness Conservation Association (LWCA), a local volunteer land trust in Presque Isle. That donation initially included a reserve life estate allowing Paulette the exclusive use and enjoyment of the property during her lifetime. In 2013 though, she opted to give up that life tenancy.

“When I did end up leaving the cabin, knowing I wasn’t going to be going up there anymore, the cabin and garage were sold, disassembled, and taken out,” she stated. “I wanted the land to be returned to its natural condition.”

In 2017, Paulette considered what to do with the remaining parcel on the property. “I don’t go up much any more, except maybe once a year just to visit the property,” she said. “That is when I decided to donate the second piece of property. It was in my will to do that as a bequest anyway, but I just decided to donate it now so I could see it happening.”

At that time, the LWCA board of directors also asked the Northwoods Land Trust to consider accepting the transfer of LWCA’s conservation lands and conservation easement projects. While the transfers are still in progress, NWLT agreed to help Paulette complete her second conservation land donation. The deed for the remaining 3.45 acre parcel was recorded in December. Now called the Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area, the conservation property will be dedicated on June 22, 2018 (see event information on page 8).

“Jerry’s younger brother, David Cary, lives in Colorado,” said Paulette. “I just notified him about this dedication and he couldn’t have been happier. He was so thrilled because he recognized what an important part of Jerry’s life that area is.”

For Paulette, the dedication will be the culmination of her vision to permanently protect Jerry’s Sanctuary: “It was a beautiful, quiet, serene environment. Hopefully it will be that way forever.”



Paulette and Jerry enjoyed Van Vliet Lake.

Van Vliet Hemlocks

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Van Vliet Hemlocks State Natural Area “protects an ecologically significant stretch of undeveloped lake frontage and harbors one of the largest, old-growth hemlock-hardwood forests in this region - now very rare in Wisconsin.

Large stands of old-growth hemlock-hardwood forest are present with scattered super-canopy white pine as well as pockets of forested wetlands and bogs. The old-growth canopy is dominated by eastern hemlock, sugar maple, yellow birch, and basswood. Associates include white ash, paper birch and ironwood.

Saplings are primarily sugar maple, though most other canopy species are also reproducing. There is some localized hemlock reproduction, but heavy deer browse is evident.

As is typical in old hemlock hardwood forests, the shrub layer is generally sparse except in gaps where sunlight can reach the forest floor and thickets of beaked hazelnut, red elderberry, American fly-honeysuckle, and thimbleberry occur.

The herb layer includes intermediate wood fern, Canada mayflower, wild sarsaparilla, rosy twisted stalk, lady fern, and sweet cicely.

Birds present include the Blackburnian warbler, black-throated green warbler, ovenbird, and osprey.

The site also includes undisturbed black ash-cedar swamps in kettle depressions, several small, undeveloped bog lakes, large beds of emergent aquatic macrophytes, and frontage on Averill and Van Vliet lakes.

A good quality poor fen supports the diminutive fairy slipper orchid situated within the characteristic assemblage of sphagnum mosses, ericaceous shrubs, sedges, and insectivorous plants.

Van Vliet Hemlocks was designated a State Natural Area in 2013.”

Welcome to Carrie Rasmussen and Kari Kirschbaum!

Carrie Rasmussen joined the NWLT staff as Development Coordinator in May of 2018. Carrie grew up in Wausau, WI. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin –Stevens Point in 2002 with a B.S. degree in Natural Resource Management – Land Use Planning.

She moved to Maine after graduating and worked for Loon Echo Land Trust for 12 years. Carrie was the Administrative/Land Stewardship Coordinator for three years, then was promoted to Executive Director where she made significant advancements in protecting local landscapes, engaging community leaders and residents, and spearheading capital campaigns, fundraising events and membership drives.

Carrie now resides in Sayner, WI where she and her son enjoy hiking, bicycling, gardening, cross-country skiing and being engaged in the local library and school.

“I moved back to Wisconsin in 2016 and am excited to work in the conservation field again. Being involved in a land trust feels natural, and I know that I will enjoy being a part of NWLT’s staff. I look forward to meeting many of its members and volunteers in the months to come,” said Carrie.



Carrie Rasmussen, NWLT Development Coordinator



Kari Kirschbaum, NWLT Land Protection Coordinator

Kari Kirschbaum also joined NWLT in May as the new Land Protection Coordinator. She spent the last twelve years working with the U.S. Forest Service as a wildlife biologist. During her time with the Forest Service, she worked in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Minnesota on the Allegheny, Wayne, Superior and Chippewa National Forests.

She worked on a wide array of projects including forest, wetland and grassland restorations. She also developed a broad background in planning and management of natural resources, including monitoring and management of wildlife, rare plants, ecosystem diversity and public use, including timber harvest and prescribed fire.

Kari grew up in Green Bay, WI. She attended UW-Madison, where she earned a B.S. in Biochemistry. She then attended the University of Michigan, where she earned her Masters degree in Natural Resource Ecology & Management studying the reproductive ecology of osprey in the Chesapeake Bay. After graduate school she worked for The Nature Conservancy in Michigan, and as a private lands biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources.

Kari lives in Eagle River with her husband and two sons. She spends her free time with her family skiing, camping, raising chickens and bees, remodeling, travelling, hiking, and anything involving water, including annual Boundary Waters canoe trips.

*Please remember the Northwoods Land Trust
in your annual and planned giving.
Give a gift that will last forever!*

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Leave a Lasting Legacy for the Northwoods

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- ☐ My additional contribution of \$_____ is also enclosed.

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Leaving a Lasting Legacy for the Northwoods

Annual Meeting & Dedication of the Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area

You are invited to participate in the Northwoods Land Trust's 2018 Annual Meeting to be held on Friday, June 22nd at the Presque Isle Community Center in Vilas County.

The event will be held jointly with the Last Wilderness Conservation Association. A free light lunch with the NWLT and LWCA boards, open to the public, will start at noon in the outdoor pavilion. This is your opportunity to meet the board members and staff of both land trust organizations. All NWLT members and any others interested in the two land trusts are invited to participate.

At 12:30 p.m., the 2018 NWLT Annual Meeting will be conducted with a brief discussion of the land trust's recent projects and activities, a celebration of new acquisitions, and a look ahead at the outstanding projects we have currently in the works.

Immediately following the Annual Meeting, we will travel about 6 miles for the official dedication of the Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area. Bring your binoculars and bug dope, and join us as we walk this property and then take a hike through the nearby Van Vliet Hemlocks State Natural Area.

If you know you will be able to join us, please contact the NWLT office at (715) 479-2490 so we can plan for lunch.

Directions: The Presque Isle Community Center is located about two blocks northeast of the intersection of County Highways B and W in downtown Presque Isle, next to the library. To get to the Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area, go 1/4 mile east on Cty. B, turn south and follow Crab Lake Road south and west about 4.5 miles. Turn north on West Van Vliet Road and follow it about 1.5 miles to Fire # 7266.



The new Van Vliet Lake Conservation Area includes about 2.4 acres and 377 feet of natural frontage on Van Vliet Lake.