



Fall 2025 LEEP Day Wrap-up

A Perfect LEEP Day Begins in the Classroom

by Sue Thurn

(Photos courtesy of Phyllis Olson)

A thick fog greeted Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area volunteer faculty as they arrived at Bony Lake the morning of September 24. By the time the seventh graders arrived, the sun was burning it off to make for the perfect fall LEEP Day!

The day actually began two weeks before in Middle School ELA Teacher, Amy Morse's classroom, where our students were exposed to key vocabulary related to critical habitat, water quality, aquatic plants, and plankton. As our experts then came into Science Teacher Andy Arthur's classroom, Drummond's 7th graders were exposed to a variety of hands-on activities.



Image: FOECLA board member Jim Bakken in the classroom.

One was an amazing mixture of map exploration skills, while students learned specific locations on Bony Lake that show critical habitats, and the animals and plants that depend upon the lake for survival. Students donned safety glasses to perform water quality tests from different lakes that demonstrated how human activities can impact our lakes. Aquatic plant identification helped teach taxonomy while developing observation skills. Using a microscope was also a first-time experience as the teens explored the microscopic world of plankton, their importance to the food web and their role in producing oxygen.

Next up was taking the seventh graders to Drummond Lake to perfect their canoeing techniques, many who canoed for the first time ever! Their new skills made new meaning of the alphabet as they learned the "J" and "C" strokes,

along with draw and pry/push and pull techniques.



Finally was what teacher Amy Morse declared one of her most favorite days of the year – LEEP Day! So many great moments were shared by our Drummond students – using aqua scopes to spot small bass and bluegill, canoeing to three different habitats, collecting plankton with nets and discovering phytoplankton and zooplankton, raking the lake bottom to collect and then identify aquatic plants, and dropping a secchi disk to make what Jim Bakken stated is one of the best secchi disk readings of Bony Lake, ever, made for a close to perfect day.



Seventh grader Emily Botten shared, "The L.E.E.P field trip was fun. I had lots of fun, we got to canoe, go out in pontoons, and throw rakes. It was a good

learning experience for me, I realized how important even the tiniest of creatures in our lakes are. Also, the canoeing was awesome, really fun!"

Emily's words highlight the fun that was had by all. This LEEP experience works. Students still talk about their memories when they run into me, the LEEP Program Coordinator, at school, a month later! Additionally, students were exposed to quality outdoor experiences along with authentic science experiments and research. The blend of activity along with the discussions led by our quality faculty (a huge thanks to our lake loving volunteers once again) led to a terrific student understanding of the importance of biodiversity, and the critical actions humans can take to protect our lakes.



The Fall 2025 **Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP)** field day was held on September 24, 2025, at longtime FOECLA member Carol LeBreck's property on Bony Lake.

Sue Thurn lives in Cable, Wisc. and is a fourth grade teacher in the Drummond Area School District. As of this spring, she is also the Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area LEEP Coordinator. Sue brings a wealth of experience as a trained Naturalist, an award-winning educator of thousands, and a valued contributor to several local groups, including the Cable Natural History Museum.

In 1994, Sue won the DNR Fisheries Educator of the Year award for her *River Rats* programs for children in Grade K-6 which studied the impact of macroinvertebrates to the water quality of the Namekagon River. When she's not teaching, Sue works for the Town of Cable and Lake Owen Association



as an aquatic invasive species Watercraft Inspector and Educator on Lake Owen and Cable's Perry, Cable, and Tahkodah Lakes.

Mission: To protect, preserve, and improve the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the Eau Claire Lakes Area watershed including the lakes, rivers, shorelands, wetlands, forests and attendant wildlife resources.

BAYFIELD AND DOUGLAS COUNTIES, WI

*Check us out on Facebook where we share photos, stories, educational events and other opportunities to learn more about the lakes, rivers, shorelands, wetlands and forests we treasure
Search for "Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area" or
click on the blue Facebook icon below.*

Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area
<https://friendsofeauclairelakesarea.com>



Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area | PO Box 1308 | Hayward, WI 54843 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!