



FRIENDS OF THE EAU CLAIRE LAKES AREA

Friends member Julie Bennett responded to our request for "daydreams" as we wait for the return of spring to northwestern Wisconsin. We hope you will enjoy her peaceful essay and the gorgeous photos taken by her husband, Terry Griffin.

April 2023

"Turtle Bay Daydream"

Julie Bennett (Upper Eau Claire Lake)

I have visited Upper Eau Claire Lake since 1960 when I first arrived with my parents and brothers. I was five years old. I don't know how my parents learned about Upper, but that initial visit changed my life forever. Since then, I've visited almost every year, despite moving more than 2000 miles away to Berkeley, CA as an adult.

I have six decades of memories of the lake and the surrounding woodlands. Among them, one stands out....



I'm in my kayak, my paddle is slicing through the still, calm water.

I'm in what my family and friends refer to as Turtle Bay—the small bay that hosts the channel to Devil's Lake.

I glide along, feeling the warmth of the sun. I pass a man who is fishing. He waves. It is quiet. I am paddling with the water.

I see movement out of the corner of my eye and hear the plop of a turtle who has been sunning himself on a log.



I finish circumnavigating the small bay and turn to go back to the “big lake.”

***It's a beautiful day. The sky is a clear blue.
I feel completely at peace.***

I am one with the lake, the fluffy white clouds, the birch trees, and the eagle soaring overhead. A dragonfly lands on the bow of my kayak and accompanies me to shore.

I daydream about returning to Turtle Bay often. It is my “all is well” place, and I’m grateful for the peace it has provided.

Julie Bennett