

THE CHAIN LETTER

July 1999 Volume 3, Number 3

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 Editor: Bill Downing, 38067 Forest Lane, Grand Rapids, MN 55744, 218-326-4730. wdowning@uslink.net. The *Chain Letter* is a means of communication among Association members, and it will work best if you contribute. Please send your comments, letters, historical notes, and news to the Editor *now*.

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FIRST THINGS FIRST! ANNUAL POT-LUCK PICNIC

EVERYBODY IS URGED TO ATTEND—

OLD MEMBERS!

NEW MEMBERS!

PEOPLE WHO ARE THINKING ABOUT IT!

SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS

Minutes of the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, Regular Meeting, June 12, 1999

Opening. The program was opened by Chair Jon Rowe. Topics for upcoming programs were announced. July, Itasca Soil and Water Conservation specialists will discuss Secchi disk readings throughout the area and the pattern of decreased water clarity on Sugar Lake in Itasca County. August, Itasca County Underwater Dive Team's under water cleanup opportunity will be discussed. September, the Department of Natural Resources Fisheries will provide recent research.

Program. Mary Blickenderfer from the University of Minnesota Research and Outreach Center (formerly known as Extension Service) was the guest of a program on lakeshore landscaping. Mary provided information including visual examples in a video "The Living Shore – Best Management Practices for Shoreland Vegetation", by the Arrowhead Water Quality Team. A slide presentation accompanied the program showing a shoreland restoration project at Big Sandy Lake in Itasca County. Comments, questions and resources were discussed. Representing the U. of M. and Outreach Center, Mary is available to assist in site visits, plan development and other resources by calling 327-4490.

Call to order. Chair Jon Rowe opened the regular meeting at 10:00 A. M.

Treasurer's Report. Cathy Rudolph submitted the following report:

Balance as of 5-22-99	\$2,292.40
Received membership dues	520.00
Total Received	520.00
Paid out:	
Coffee and rolls	10.00
Total paid out	10.00
Balance as of 6-12-99	\$2,802.40
Paid members 1998:	55
Paid members 1999:	27 (to date)

Highway 38 was reported on by Bud Sage, who attends the Highway 38 Leadership Board meetings. Highway 38 from Grand Rapids to County Road #49 is to be redone, with a bicycle lane by the year 2000, Highway 19 to Marcell resurfaced by 2003, Pug Hole Lake area will be redesigned for better water access. A technology committee has been developed between the 38 Leadership Board and students of Bigfork High School to develop a web site for information access and updates.

Water Quality Report. Jon Rowe briefly described the testing process our Association has been involved in, and invited members to take a copy of the full report submitted by Dr. Bill Downing.

Loons. Two of the loons, which were tagged with a radio and antenna, are missing, and the D. N. R. con-

tacted Jon Rowe asking the Wabana Chain of Lakes residents in locating them.

Septic services were contacted by George Wilbert, with two companies agreeing to give a discount for a minimum of four residents at a time in Wabana Township:

- Scooter Septic: septic and backflushing \$40 plus \$20 fee for county waste treatment dumping. \$20 for a dry well. Call George Wilbert at 327-1018 to arrange for services under this discount.
- Bunes Septic offers residents a 10% discount for anyone living on the following lakes: Wabana, Little Wabana, Bluewater, Trout, and Little Trout. Call for free estimates 326-2967.

Septic pumping is greatly encouraged by the Wabana Chain water-testing group. Pumping on regular basis is an immediate prevention from nutrients going into lakes and watersheds producing algae growth and decreased water clarity.

Summer picnic plans were discussed and Chairman Rowe requested a committee who might want to assist in the planning. Nancy Ellsworth recommended choosing a date immediately. Following discussion, Saturday July 24th was considered. Nancy will call the Wabana Township Clerk to confirm the use of the township hall and picnic pavilion. Bud Sage suggested an idea, which a picnic beach site be located and folks can boat to the site.

Membership and address updates.

July is the annual membership renewal month, reminded Cathy Rudolph. Annual \$20. Memberships can be made out to: **Wabana Chain of Lakes Association.**

Mailing Address Information:

New Members and/or Change of Address:

Permanent Address, Address #1:
Months of the year for mailing? _____
Name:
Address:
City: State: Zipcode:
Seasonal Address, Address #2:
Months of the year for mailing? _____
Name:
Address:
City: State: Zipcode:

Mail this form and/or your membership dues to:
Wabana Chain of Lakes Association
Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer,
36542 Havenwood Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Itasca County Zoning information was presented by Jackie Baggott, as a case scenario, due to her home on Trout Lake destroyed by a recent fire. In applying for a permit to rebuild her home she was asked by Itasca County to move the remaining two

guest cabins back from their existing lakeshore site. Jackie has requested a variance on her 140' lakeshore lot on the north end of Trout Lake and will know more following a June 18th hearing.

Lakeshore taxation issues were updated by Dick Chambers representing Citizens for Tax Reform, the group projects lakeshore assessments to rise rapidly. The local Citizens for Tax Reform group is chaired by Jackie Baggott, who described the need for a stronger effort in combining with the Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners Coalition Inc., in order to get a more even debate in next year's legislative session. Web site information is available at: www.itascataxpayers.com. Dick wanted to point out that "suggested" membership fees to the Minnesota (MSRPO) organization are based on market value of your seasonal property, and begin as low as \$25.00, copies of membership forms and information were made available at the meeting.

Introductions of all present were initiated by Chair Jon Rowe. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Next meeting dates: July 10, August 14, and September 11.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Lick, Secretary.

Minutes of the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, Regular Meeting, July 10, 1999

Guest Speaker: Chairman Jon Rowe introduced Limnologist Justin Watkins from the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Citizen Lake Monitoring Programs were reviewed from a statewide perspective, initiated in 1973 with 74 lakes in Minnesota monitored that year. In 1998 Itasca County alone monitored 85 lakes (7% of the lakes in the County) as part of a statewide total of 816.

Sissebakwet Lake (Sugar Lake) water testing results have had an alarming decrease in water clarity recently, reported Justin. Test data, lake and groundwater make up as well as other variables were discussed. A number of theories were discussed although there is not enough data. at this time to draw any conclusions. The Sissebakwet Lake situation can be a reference for research ideas for any other lake studies.

Call to Order. The regular meeting was opened by Chairman Jon Rowe, with introductions of all members and guests. Members suggested permanent name tags be made for members attending, with Chain of Lakes map on each tag. Cathy Rudolph said she would help organize the project.

Minutes will be available in the upcoming July *Wabana Chain Letter* and will come up for approval at the next meeting.

Treasurer's Report by Cathy Rudolph.

Balance as of 5-12-99	\$2,802.40
Received membership dues	440.00
Total income received	440.00
Paid out:	
Treasure Bay Printing	297.35
Ron Redact (stamps, labels)	<u>152.50</u>
Total Paid Out	449.85
Balance in checking	\$2,792.55
Savings in CD	\$2,000.00
Interest received	<u>43.64</u>
Total:	\$2,043.64
Balance as of 7-10-99	\$4,836.19
Paid members in 1998	55
Paid members in 1999	49

Cathy reminded members that annual memberships are due in July. The Treasurer's Report was approved as read.

Overhead Screen. It was suggested that the Association discuss acquiring a screen for the community center with the Township. The motion was approved. Chairman Rowe suggested the advisory committee could follow up on this project.

E. coli Testing. Bill Downing had been concerned by cows on steep slopes and standing in Wabana water, and performed some preliminary *E. coli* tests, using tests on other parts of Wabana for comparison. Not only was the cattle area high, but several other more inhabited areas tested high, after the very heavy rains we had had; particularly in the southeastern and southwestern bays of Wabana. It will take much more testing before any definite conclusions can be reached, but members are urged to look carefully for the possibility of septic systems overflowing onto land at times of heavy rains.

He explained that *E. coli* is one species of "coliform" bacteria that normally inhabit the colon, which normally causes no illness, but which, if present in water, indicates fecal contamination of the water. If intestinal discharges have contaminated the water, large numbers of coliform bacteria are certain to be present, and if *E. coli* is present, other, disease-producing organisms *could* be present, if carriers of the diseases are defecating where it can get into the water. Although *E. coli* lives only hours in water, other pathogens and parasites [such as *Giardia*] may live there for a long time, so *E. coli* can be an indicator. Prolonged or hard rains will sweep *E. coli* from the land or overflowing septic system into the water. The EPA considers that over 200 *E. coli* of warm-blooded origin per 100 milliliters of water makes the water non-swimmable.

Bill provided whirl-pak sterile bags for water collection, and an invitation for anyone on the Chain of Lakes who might be concerned about their drinking or area lake water could bring samples (kept

cold and within twelve hours) to Dr. Downing for testing.

Again Jon Rowe reminded, pumping of septic tanks can greatly reduce the risks of contamination in well and lake waters!

Private sale of lands to the Conservation Fund ongoing report was updated by Joel Solomon. Explaining how federal acquisition of lands for the public domain could be exchanged through the Conservation Fund. Joel reviewed a grant proposal to the Blandin Foundation to set up a fund to assist the seller with closing costs. The proposal was denied, but recent conversations with the Blandin Foundation encouraged the Chain of Lakes Association to re-submit another proposal. Joel will continue to work on the process. Members thanked Joel for his work and persistence.

Exotic Species Report. Jon Rowe explained the recent Eurasian water milfoil plant infestation in McKinney Lake in Grand Rapids. Jon showed examples of the plant from a reference book he highly recommends, *Through the Looking Glass...A Field Guide to Aquatic Plants*. Jon described the process to try to manage the invader, uses of a specific herbicide although it can not entirely kill off the milfoil. Members discussed the threat of milfoil and zebra mussels to the Wabana Chain of Lakes. The advisory committee suggested the next upcoming large use holidays, public boat accesses be monitored by members assisting in information to Lake Users about checking their boats, equipment, etc. before entering the lakes. Nancy Ellsworth described the milfoil alert signs should be posted right next to access docks, not on the side of landings as they are now. The advisory committee will suggest this to the D. N. R.

Members discussed lake observations need to be acted on, such as the Eurasian water milfoil which was brought to attention 2 years ago and nothing was done until now. The *E. coli* alert was also discussed further by members, determining that the current lake water testing program both scientific analysis by Dr. Downing and the citizen Secchi disk readings could be assisted by the Association. Bud Sage moved a letter by generated to Itasca County and the ICOLA county lakes associations request assistance to the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association to use whatever technology available (i.e., fly-over infrared photography) to assess the current septic sewage runoff into lakes. All approved. Chairman Rowe will see that the advisory committee acts on the motion.

Association elections in August were easily handled by officers Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer, and Susan Lick, Secretary, willing to renew their terms for another year.

The Annual Potluck Picnic sponsored by the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association will be on July 24th at 5:30 PM at the Community Center.

The July Newsletter will be published before July 24th, to advertise the Potluck Picnic.

A Membership Directory was suggested, and members felt it was a good idea, if the advisory committee could get the information together.

Meeting adjourned at 11 am by Chairman Jon Rowe. Next meeting: Annual Potluck, July 24th.

Regular meetings: Augusts 14 and September 11.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lick, Secretary.



LETTER

July 2, 1999

I particularly enjoy the historical articles. Regarding the Henselin Farm, this property is now owned by Dan and Jean Bergerson, and they have some history in their files. The Martin place (really once a town of Martin, with school and all) has a rich history, and there are still Martin family survivors living in Bovey. I can eventually do an article on the logging grades in the area, most of which still exist deep in the woods. I will be unable to attend the Saturday July 10 meeting. Bill Berg, Trout Lake.

HISTORY: The Bridges of Wabana Township

Bud Sage and Harold Unger collaborated on this article, for publication in *The Chain Letter*. They had the help of Mr. Keith W. Matson, a Forestry Technician from the Deer River Ranger District, and of Bob Sage.

The two bridges have some interesting history as to date and background. The bridge known as the Harold Unger bridge was built in the mid 1950's. Prior to that, a bridge to accommodate vehicle traffic did not exist. Back in the early 1900's a man by the

name of Anton Haglee homesteaded on the thoroughfare between Little Trout—also know as Interlachen—and Trout Lake. Although there were no roads, Mr. Haglee is reported to have built a log home for his family. During the school year the family lived in town due to the transportation problems.

A descriptive photo exists showing a rather crude footbridge crossing the thoroughfare, and it could be one built to reach the Haglee place. The photo also suggests it was designed to allow log flow under, and the background further suggests second growth timber. The bridge built by Mr. H. Unger looks quite the same today as in the photo supplied by Harold.

Wm. E. Sage [grandfather of Bud and Bob] built the other bridge crossing the Thoroughfare between Bluewater and Wakens bay in 1920, with the help of Roy Wakeman. The original bridge was all cedar with the trees cut from a cedar swamp on the East Side of Bluewater. The bridge was to give access to the property purchased by Wm. E. Sage in 1916.

Itasca County was to grade a road in, after a brushing out by Sage, but never did; and the bridge was not used for vehicle traffic for many years. The road-way was again brushed out, and with local residents living year-round on the south end of the lake, the county did run a road into the bridge. This was in the mid 1950's. The bridge deck was rebuilt in 1978 and in 1991, new cedar poles were installed to replace weathered ones. The original poles at water level were left in place due to their condition.

The first bridge across the creek flowing from Trout lake to Little Trout lake [Interlachen] was a foot bridge constructed of cedar poles driven into the

creek bottom with cross pieces on the uprights and planks on the crosspieces for walking (1957 photograph). It is assumed that Anton Haglee, who lived on the north side of the creek, and Bill Barber, on the south side, constructed the bridge together. If Barber was involved in the construction, it would have been prior to 1925 as he was fatality shot (a murder-suicide) that year near the footbridge. The footbridge was removed in 1958 and was located where the existing bridge is now. The cedar poles were partially decomposed at the water surface, but well preserved below the water line.

The existing bridge was constructed in 1958. It was planned earlier, but legal problems caused delay. Initially it was assumed that a branch road off the Bluewater road, called the Barber road, could be used to access the bridge site. After close inspection of the old township records it was determined that the road along the north side of Bluewater lake had been surveyed and legalized, but the Barber road was not completed and not legalized. Proper easements were obtained and a permit from the Department of Conservation, Division of Waters, was granted after submitting cross-sections of the creek and completed plans for the bridge.

Ernie Heaton, Senior, who lived near Clearwater lake, owned and operated a small bulldozer tractor. With his aid, and using fill from the road just south of the bridge site, construction began in the summer of 1958. As there wasn't any road access to the north side of the creek, all work was done from the south side. A makeshift boom chained to the bulldozer blade was used to position the bridge parts. A small front-end loader carried fill across

the bridge to complete the access to the north side of the creek. Originally there were 4" x 4" spreaders underneath three of beams. Their purpose was to prevent the two bents from tilting inward due to the pressure from the fill. They were removed by some vandals about 15 years ago who evidently wanted more clearance for their boat. Some improvements were made on the deck in 1986; otherwise the bridge is as originally built.

PROGRESS REPORT: LAKE CHEMICAL TESTING

On Sunday, June 27, Sue Lick and Bill Downing joined Bob Gephart in his boat, to collect the second of the four sets of samples we intend to take during 1999 for our continuing lake testing. Members who have been following this process know that 1999 is a year for thorough testing for phosphorus, nitrogen and chlorophyll, in each of our ten lake basins, four times during the year. We take them to Cass Lake laboratory, and it takes a while to get the results. Last month we were able to publish the results of the May ice-out tests in the June *Chain Letter*, but we did not get June's results for this issue. We will be taking two more sets of samples this year; one in late August and one in October, and Bob Gephart would be glad to hear from volunteers to take the samples.

REPRINT FROM THE HERALD REVIEW

Last month we began to reprint (with permission) a series of articles from the Grand Rapids *Herald Review* about the Wabana Chain of Lakes in the late Twenties or early Thirties. We have room for just one page this month, and will publish more as space allows. You remember we were hearing about that remarkable man, Dave Cochran. Here is more:

Business was very good and the boat he constructed was too small so in 1904 Dave built a 35 foot launch which easily could carry 40 people, this same year he also built a large houseboat for his guests, it boasted a kitchen, dining room, living room and four berths. The arms attached from the houseboat to the steam boat, Dave would push the house boat over Wabana, Bluewater and Trout Lake. The folks at Arrowhead point tell about a trip they took many years ago in this houseboat, intending to go up to the head of Trout Lake, when entering Trout Lake a severe gale hit them forcing them into shore. After a little excitement Dave managed to get away from shore and pushed them up to the head of the lake. If half the stories of Dave Cochran are true, he must have been a most versatile person, his renown as a logger, houseboat and steam boat builder, resort man and sportsman and a host of unusual ability being well known.

In 1900 Dave built a log schoolhouse. Miss Bird Champlain was the teacher for the two years, 1900 and 1901. In 1902 Ruth Hawkins was teacher, in 1903 Nell McAlpine, 1904 and 1905 Bertha LaFreniere. The school was destroyed by fire about this time and the locality was without a school until 1920 when a log school house was constructed in the Clearwater section, Miss Helen Carlberg was the first teacher. And in 1925 a new frame modern building was constructed at the corner of the Clearwater and Wabana roads.

About this time Dave secured the post office, and remained postmaster for seven years. Old timers will recall George Wasson, the mail carrier on this star route as a complete embodiment of Uncle Sam, an old Cape Cod fish-

Cod fisherman who came here for his health. Mr. Cochran maintained a general store in connection with the hotel and post office.

Sunday school services were conducted regularly and were attended by summer residents as well as the settlers.

The hotel served for many social functions and dances. Old timers speak of vivid remembrances of the old time fancy dances of 1860 which and Mr. and Mrs. Dave Cochran and Mr. and Mrs. Wakeman used to give.

The first wedding to be performed in Wabana occurred in August 1904 when Pearl Cochran and Wm. McLaughlin were united in marriage. H. S. Huson, Judge of Probate of Grand Rapids performed the ceremony. The bridesmaid was Miss Mable Thor and the best man Bill Martin. Over 100 guests attended the wedding, among them were Mr. and Mrs. E. C...Kiley of Grand Rapids, E. J. Murray of Duluth, Mrs. T. E. Canfield of Salem, Oregon Mr. and Mrs. Jones of St. Louis, Mo., M. S. Burrows [etc.]

In the September 24, 1904 issue of the Herald Review, E. C. Kiley writes of this resort as being one of the best known and most popular, also very reasonably priced. He tells of the houseboat, launch and the wonderful bass and trout fishing especially, and that Trout Lake was one of the most prolific producers of trout, and Wabana literally teemed with black bass.

About 1899 Geo. Wasson settled on Little Wabana, now the Friend place. In 1899 Tony Woods bought his farm on the banks of Clearwater brook which he still owns and operates. This year Dave Cochran had his first fishermen, four men from Elgin, Ill., a Mr. A. J. Mann and Messrs. Wait, Weed and Van Gorden. These men were members of the Elgin Muskelonge Club and used

to spend their summers at Eagle River, Wisconsin where Mr. Cochran previously conducted a place. His next guests were Frank and Billy Nelson of Rockford, Ill. (the famous manufacturers of the Rockford socks) and many of their friends. One of these was Barney Kay, who came in 1900, the following year he rented a cabin from Wakemans, *but* Barney liked the black bass so he followed them up to the head of the lake. He began with Martin when they started their resort up at the head of Trout Lake, later he built his own home there, where he now lives.

Hayward, Freeman and McClure, loggers, came to this section in 1899. Freeman's and Gray's big rollway was located a short distance west of Wakemans. Two large drives were taken out of Wabana in 1899 and 1900 by Price Bros. These drives were taken out by fair wind and head works. Head works consisted of a great raft, the remains of which today furnish docks and boatlandings on the lake, timbers were about three feet by four feet and about forty feet long, were tied together and held the capstan, rope and a team of horses, men and anchors.

First big booms would be constructed about the size of an acre, then by fair winds, four men rowing a batteau would carry the anchor about 500 feet and drop it. The head works were tied to the boom, and then the horses would wind up the rope on the capstan, in this manner the logs were taken across the lake into the sluiceway. Later steam boats were used, which would pull the head works. The remains of the last steamboat are now just west of the upper Wabana Brook bridge, north of Wa-ga-tha-ca... (More later)

SECCHI DISK READINGS

Nancy Ellsworth and her group of volunteer readers are off to a fine start for 1999, and the results look good. It is true that you were promised graphs of these readings, but it takes up too much space to do that yet. When we have a summer's worth of data, we'll see how they can be presented graphically.

By this time you are probably getting used to the shorthand designation of our lake basins, but just in case you have forgotten, they are: TN=Trout North; TS=Trout South; IN=Interlachen (aka Little Trout); LW=Little Wabana; BN=Bluewater North; BS=Bluewater South; WN=Wabana North; WC=Wabana Central; WS=Wabana South; and WW=Wabana Wakeman's Bay.

The data are not presented on the precise day they were observed, but rather in a particular week's time, which seems sensible since they are most valuable if taken approximately weekly, as weather and schedules permit.

Lake	Secchi Disk Readers	5/15-5/21	5/22-5/28	5/29-6/4	6/05-6/11	6/12-6/18	6/19-6/25	6/26-7/2
TN	Bill Berg							
TS	Betty-Harold Unger	16.5	17		19	19	19	
IN	Betty-Harold Unger	14.5	16.5		20	20	20	
LW	Jon Rowe							
BN	George R. Klacan				18	21	22	
BS	Nancy Ellsworth				20	23	24	25
WN	Bill Downing			16				16
WC	Mary Gephart			17		18		20
WS	S.Lick-E.Christmas		16	12	17	17		
WW	Duane M. Amundson			16	16	16	16	

JULY 1 STARTS A NEW YEAR—\$20 DUES ARE DUE NOW!

→Are there family members or other Friends of the Chain, who should receive the *Chain Letter*? Please send their names and addresses to Cathy Rudolph, and we will include them in the mailing!←

Dues Payment and Address Update Form. Please cut off and mail.

Address #1, Permanent Address:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____

Which months of the year for mailing? _____

Address #2, Seasonal Address:

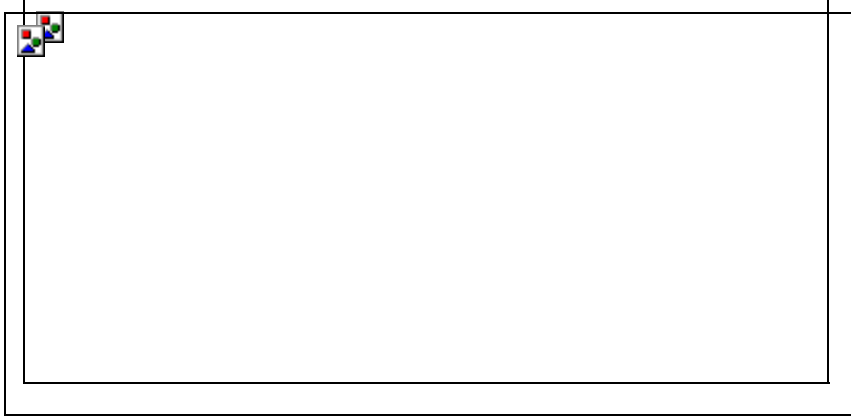
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Which months of the year for mailing? _____

Mail this form and your \$20.00 check made out to the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, to:
 Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer, 36542 Havenwood Drive,
 Grand Rapids, MN 55744



**WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION
NINTH ANNUAL POTLUCK PICNIC
SATURDAY, JULY 24, 1999, 5:30 p. m.
AT THE WABANA TOWN HALL PICNIC PAVILION.**

COME! COME!

**THE ASSOCIATION WILL PROVIDE BRATS AND BUNS,
BRING YOUR FAVORITE DISH TO PASS!
OLD MEMBERS, NEW MEMBERS, PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS—
COME TO ENJOY A GOOD TIME WITH OLD AND NEW LAKE FRIENDS.**

Cathy Rudolph
36542 Havenwood Drive
Grand Rapids, MN 55744