

## THE CHAIN LETTER

August 2000

(Okay, it's a little past August! I had a little scheduling trouble, and more computer trouble. I apologize!)

Volume 4, Number 4

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 Editor: Bill Downing, 1834 Simpson Street, Falcon Heights, MN 55113. 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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**THE WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION WILL HOLD ITS REGULAR MEETING ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2000, AT 9:00 A. M. ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND.**

WHAT? ANOTHER ISSUE?

The July issue contained a solemn threat, arising from a June decision that we could not afford to go on sending *The Chain Letter* out to an extended mailing list including all people in Wabana Township; and therefore if people didn't subscribe or join up, the July issue was the last they would see. Well, the membership voted at the July meeting that it was too important to continue communicating as widely as possible during this critical time in the life and growth of the Association, and so we would continue sending to the extended mailing list until the end of the year 2000. That means that non-members and non-subscribers will get this issue, plus whatever comes after it this year, *gratis*. That probably means one more issue, in October or November, when the Editor can get full cooperation from his schedule and his computer, and the results of the lake testing by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

### FROM THE NEW PRESIDENT

*Jon Rowe gave us two splendid terms as President, and then felt he needed a rest, so with regret and thanks we move to a new occupant. Dick Chambers is a familiar face and a hard worker for the Association, and agreed to move from Vice President and run for President. We duly and unanimously voted him in at the Annual Meeting in August, with Loren (Bud) Sage as his Vice President. This is an appropriate move on the Association's part, since Dick is married to Pat, granddaughter of Dave Cochran, owner of the original hotel on Wabana; so a tradition is continued. Here is Dick's first President's Letter:*

During the past few years I have had the privilege of working with Jon Rowe, as well as our membership, to help make our Lake Association a better organization. It has been a wonderful experience working with Jon. He has brought a lot to our organization and it will be a really tough job to try to fill his shoes, But with all of us working together I think we can do the job. The lake association is a great place to meet our neighbors and enjoy the activities we all receive by living on this wonderful chain of lakes. There is much to be said about these lakes. Our membership has certainly grown in the past few years, but I am hoping that with new ideas from you and other members we can grow even more. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Sept. 9th. See you there. Dick Chambers

**MINUTES**  
**WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION**

**Regular Meeting – August 12, 2000**

**Opening.** Chair Jon Rowe called the meeting to order at 9:25am.

**Minutes.** The minutes as printed in the July 2000 WCOL Chain Letter were approved as printed.

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

Balance as of 7/8/00	\$2,489.59
Received:	
Membership dues	\$ 580.00
Contributions	\$ 265.00
Subscriptions to chain ltr.	\$ 40.00
Picnic-potluck	\$ 79.00
Total Received:	\$ 964.00
Paid Out:	
Stamps	\$ 255.75
Printing	\$ 219.11
Picnic-potluck supplies	\$ 92.45
Total Paid Out:	\$ 567.31
Balance as of 8/12/00	\$2,886.28

Paid members to date 76

Annual memberships are due in July.

The Treasurer's report was approved as read.

**Correspondence Received.** A letter and subscription check for the WCOL Chain Letter was received from Mary Ives, thanking the association for their efforts. Discussion: the WCOL Chain Letter and educational materials are mailed to all county commissioners and to the county zoning office.

**Secchi Disk.** Water Monitoring was featured as an article and photos in a recent edition of the Grand Rapids Herald Review, featuring Nancy Ellsworth, the WCOL Secchi disk monitoring coordinator.

**Annual Potluck Picnic.** Nancy Ellsworth reported over 60 people attended with an added magic show by Joe Stephens. Voluntary donations were suggested for the first time and the funds nearly covered the costs to the association to host the picnic.

**WCOL Chain Letter.** Juan Lazo sent a letter offering to assist in funding the chain letter if needed. The advisory council suggested to members that they appreciated Juan's offer but the recent notice concerning dues, contributions and chain letter subscriptions in the chain letter has just been effected, and will wait to see how it works.

**Motion.** The WCOL association will continue to send the chain letter to all residents in Wabana Township until the end of the year 2000. Notices will be sent to all residents to renew, either a full membership at \$20. or a chain letter subscription at \$10 which will be required to continue to receive mailings. Moved by Swanny Voneida/seconded Howard Owen. All approved.

**Motion.** The WCOL association create a membership committee, with one of its tasks to get notices sent out in May about annual dues being due in July. Moved by Bill Downing/seconded by David Lick. All approved.

**Septic System Compliance Plan.** David Lick reported that the Itasca County Commissioners approved the 5 year plan proposed by the WCOL. The ten volunteers for the initial phase of septic inspections have been sent agreements from the county. The county has let out bids for inspection services. Next year 20 volunteers will be needed for voluntary inspections. Discussions included; sharing systems especially for seasonal residents, thanking the county commissioners for their wise move and to continue sending out educational materials.

Low interest loans will be available from the State of Minnesota. A total of \$79,000. is available on a first come first serve basis to any Itasca County lakeshore owner. The American Bank of Grand Rapids will administer the loans at a rate of 3% for 5 years.

**Historical records.** Jon Rowe has received a box of WCOL materials, and described the history of the WCOL association starting with the Joyce Estate, campsites on the chain, and many other issues. Jon's overall observation is that the septic system issue has led the association to continue to evolve into one of self-responsibility for the stewardship of the lakes.

**Exotic Species Education.** The association again decided to ask for volunteers to hand out Eurasian Milfoil information at the public landings on Wabana Lake during the Labor Day Weekend. Bud Sage will coordinate the north landing and David Lick the south landing, requesting two-hour shifts from volunteers.

**Election of Officers.** Dick Chambers was nominated as President and Bud Sage as Vice-President. All approved. Members thanked Jon Rowe for his fine leadership.

**Next Meeting.** Saturday, September 9, 2000, Wabana Township Hall 8:30am coffee/social 9:00am program and meeting.

**Respectfully submitted, Susan Lick, Secretary.**

*Members will note with relief that according to our Constitution we elect the President and Vice President in one year, and the Secretary and Treasurer in the next year. When we wrote the Constitution we thought this was a good move, to maintain continuity in the Steering Committee, and so it has. Therefore we retain our fine Secretary, Sue Lick, who wrote the above Minutes, and our all-time wonderful Treasurer, Cathy Rudolph.*

## AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY

*At the August meeting, Dave Lick reported that, after a year or more of discussion, the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association has entered into a historic agreement with Wabana Township and the Itasca County Board of Commissioners; an agreement that has surprised people all over the county and the state. It took a particular combination of people and circumstances—Association members, Commissioners, legal experts, and county experts in zoning and septic systems—to write and agree on all its parts, to arrive at just the right blending of regulations and agreements to protect everything: the county's waters, the rights of the lake shore owners, and the outcome for the people of the township and the county, both now and in the future. Dave made the process so clear, that I asked him to write a note to the Chain Letter about it. —Editor.*

Recently the Itasca County board of Commissioners entered into an agreement with the Wabana area Chain of Lakes Association and Wabana township. The agreement asserts that in the year 2000 the county will do a compliance inspection for 10 volunteers on their sewage systems. In the year 2001 the county will perform 20 inspections for residents that come forward.

Beginning in 2002 the county will then inspect any system that has been installed prior to 1992. It was the association's intent to provide information to the constituents of the township as to why this endeavor is being undertaken and also make sure that residents had an opportunity to volunteer rather than to be immediately forced into compliance. So far we have more than the 10 people for the first year and we are now trying to fulfill the second year volunteers.

This lake association is unique in many ways: they have the best baseline data in the county when it comes to water quality parameters (back to 1991), association members have felt that a proactive approach to fertilizer and sewage is better than fixing the lakes after they have deteriorated. Remember that other associations have tried to instigate a program of compliance but have failed due to too many skeptics. This association through the years has always taken on controversial issues that try to maintain the highest water quality. It is good to see a grass roots organization assist in making policy.

This association has a number of hard working individuals who made this issue palatable to all involved. The process took eleven months and three of the goals have been fulfilled. There has been an educational program and the low interest money has now been found. To date \$79,000 has been appropriated to Itasca County for 3% loans to be awarded to residents who need the fiscal help to accomplish compliance. The last goal is to get all systems on the township lakes into compliance with the county ordi-

nance. If the agreement works as planned sewage in this township will be treated to remove pathogens and nutrients better than any township in this county. Rather than pointing a finger at visitors to our lakes causing degradation, here is a classic example of the people that live on the lake system cleaning up their backyard first. The families involved in this organization deserve a pat on the back for having the foresight and perseverance for setting a precedent that should help to keep lakes in this township pristine for the next generation of users. The Wabana Chain of Lakes Association has not only identified a problem that exists county wide but has offered a workable solution. Hopefully this attitude will be contagious and this practice will be accomplished throughout the county.

## LETTERS

*Now at last we are getting an increase in communications to the Association! What we hoped for when we began The Chain Letter was that people would write and voice opinions, give history, and share whatever they had on their minds that would be of interest to the members. Here are four:*

### **From Ted Voneida:**

At the meeting Saturday, Swanny and I were once again impressed with the high quality of the discussion, and the great concern our membership has for maintaining and improving the quality of our lakes. We were especially impressed with the real progress that has been made on the septic tank issue. This would never have happened without the tremendous effort put forth by several members of the association.

We recently had an experience that I would like to share with you and our Chain Letter readers. We took some friends to the Joyce Estate, and happened to become engaged in conversation with a couple from Deer Lake. When I mentioned that we are from Bluewater, they immediately responded by telling us how well known our Wabana Chain of Lakes Association is to many residents of the Deer/Moose Lake area. He pointed out that to his knowledge, ours is the only group in the area to have taken any serious action of the septic tank issue. It soon became clear that other groups are aware of the progress we have made over these past years, and as a result, there seems to be an increasing desire to follow our lead.

I suggested that it might be worthwhile to have an inter-association meeting once or twice a year, at which ideas could be exchanged and people could become more familiar with the activities of other

groups. We agreed that there are things we can all learn from each other, especially since there is no longer any question that what affects one lake eventually affects all lakes.

The fact is that we really should be working toward increasing our communication among lake associations. There is no way of predicting how many would attend, of course, but if only a few came, it would be a start. You never know when a brief conversation may spur someone on to activate their own group. The Wabana Chain of Lakes Association has been highly successful, in my opinion, in taking bold and progressive steps toward improving the quality of our lakes. We need to do whatever we can, at both the personal and group levels, to let others know what we have done and are continuing to do.

With best wishes, and great hope for the continuing improvement of our lakes,

Ted Voneida

### **From County Commissioner Ives:**

I have become accustomed to receiving your "Chain Letter" and would like to continue. I'm enclosing the \$10 subscription fee...

Thank you for sending the publication to me in the past. It is a good way to stay aware of citizen priorities. It is important to work with all residents of Itasca County, not just folks in our district.

Thanks, Mary F. Ives

### **From Juan Lazo:**

Read about the cost dilemma regarding the publishing of the Chain Letter.... if the association would not mind some "commercials" we may be able to provide the printing, folding, addressing and mailing services at little or no cost. You would provide the Letter as a MS Word file and pay for the postage (bulk or otherwise). If you think the association would be interested I would like to present it to some of my clients to see if there is advertiser interest before proceeding. Let me know. Juan Lazo, a Wabana member  
Treasure Bay Printing Co.

*Distant members may not know that Juan is Mayor of Grand Rapids, among his numerous positions, and his family lake place is on Wabana's Island Sound. I turned the idea over to the Steering Committee, which postponed decision, waiting to see how the present arrangement works out. This seems a very generous proposal!*

### **From Bob Sage:**

Sure enjoyed your last Chain Letter, as I do all of them you so aptly write. Regarding the "Why is Bluewater Blue" piece, John did a great analysis. The enclosed may be of interest from the Minneapolis *Tribune* of July

1959. I have the original article, in color, framed in my archives. Mighty interesting, huh?

*Yes, Bob said it was in July 1959 that the Tribune wrote about the blue color of Bluewater. Remember last month, the Chain Letter had a lot of speculation from John Downing and me about that color? We were right, but could have saved a lot of thought and words if we had checked the Tribune of 41 years ago! Here's a copy of the text Bob sent, without the color picture, of course.*  
-Editor

## **BLUEWATER'S COLOR**

### **Minneapolis Tribune, July 1959**

Everyone calls Minnesota's 11,000 lakes sky blue. But within this general color category lie many variations—from baby blue to turquoise blue to something almost pie blue. What makes our waters blue and why the differences in hue?

John B. Moyle, supervisor of the section of research and planning with the Minnesota division of game and fish, says color of lakes arises from three causes: dissolved material or stains in the water, growth of minute animals and plants, or the reflection of colored light from tiny dissolved particles in the water.

The color variation in the lakes shown on this page [*the article had a big colored picture attached*] results predominantly from the third reason plus a significant difference in the structures of the lakes. Bluewater lake is deep, with a maximum depth of 100 feet, and contains an unusual amount of dissolved lime—yet it is clear. Sunlight caught by the lime particles is reflected back through the deep waters and results in an appearance of intense blue.

Little Trout lake is also fairly deep, with depths running to 90 feet. But unlike Bluewater, Little Trout is fed by several streams which drain into the lake through swamplands. These stream waters are colored by yellowish and brownish stain from decaying swamp material. And, of course, this color additive influences the shade of blue.

The reflection of blue-green light from dissolved particles in lake water is known as the Tyndall effect. The same phenomenon, often called light "scattering," causes the blue color of the sky and many animal colors such as the blue in blue-jay feathers. You can't extract blue color either from the water, of a blue lake or from a blue-jay feather. The color is like that of a rainbow, it's only colored light.

**NOTICE PLEASE!  
THE WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION  
WILL HOLD ITS REGULAR MEETING ON SAT-  
URDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2000, AT 9:00 A.  
M. ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND.**

## REPRINT ABOUT SECCHI DISKS

*The Grand Rapids Herald Review for August 6, 2000, carried an excellent article about Secchi disk readings, complete with a photograph of our own Nancy Ellsworth taking a reading from her pontoon boat. Many of our readers are too far away to obtain the Herald Review, so I am reprinting it here. --Editor*

### **Secchi disk volunteers collect valuable data.**

**by Seth Woehrle**

Herald-Review intern

What Nancy Ellsworth is doing doesn't look all that scientific. An untrained observer watching her, perched on the edge of her pontoon boat in the middle of Lake Bluewater, raising and lowering a white metal disk on a rope might come to the conclusion that she is, forgive me, off the deep end.

But that unassuming metal disk that she sinks into the clear blue water twice a week, is actually a powerful scientific tool that was invented by a priest more than 130 years ago and still used today.

Pietro Angelo Secchi was an Italian Jesuit in the 19th century who was famous for his discoveries in astrophysics. As the scientific advisor to the pope, he was commissioned to measure the transparency of the Mediterranean Sea for the Papal Navy. He invented what would later bear his name, the Secchi disk.

The Secchi disk can transcend its decidedly low-tech appearance when a volunteer lowers it off the shady side of their boat until it cannot be seen, noting the depth. When this simple task is done twice a week, the data can then be analyzed to see if the water quality of the lake is increasing or decreasing.

This information is invaluable to biologists and other officials who need to know the water quality of our lake filled state so that they can make better decisions on which lakes need help. The volunteers and their disks make pin-pointing trouble, out of a possible 10,000, easier.

Perhaps dropping a little piece of metal in the water still doesn't sound very important and the words oligotrophic, mesotrophic and eutrophic just contain too many syllables to even think about.

Maybe it would be better to put Secchi disk readings into clearer terms: "A one meter drop in Secchi Disk transparency could translate to a 10 percent to 15 percent drop in waterfront property values." That is from Canada's Environmental Science and Engineering Magazine citing a study from the University of Maine.

Secchi disk readings have yet to reach that level of significance in northern Minnesota but Art Norton, district manager of Itasca County's Soil and Water Conservation office, says that increased development is starting to put more financial pressure on finding the perfect lake.

"I think it's starting to happen," said Norton. "There isn't as much available land and the price per foot of lake-shore has been going up."

Norton says there are signs that Secchi disk transparency is becoming more and more important to lake residents.

"Soil and Water Conservation and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency did a two-year study on Siseebakwet Lake, said Norton. "They had a situation where their Secchi readings, which average around 12 to 14 feet over the whole summer, decreased to about 7 feet during a period of three years, which is really fast. That doesn't normally happen."

The property owners initiated the study themselves, concerned about the quality of their lake. "I think that the people on the Wabana Chain of Lakes are concerned that the same thing might happen," said Norton, referring to the organized land owners like Nancy Ellsworth. Members of the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association take Secchi readings and volunteer at public water access points where they remind boaters to clean their propellers to stop the spread of Eurasian water milfoil.

Ellsworth has been taking Secchi readings on Lake Bluewater for nine years. At one point during her monitoring of the exceptionally clear lake, she had to add rope to the Secchi Disk so that she could obtain a reading of 27 feet.

Norton says that the Soil and Water Conservation and the MPCA needs more volunteers. "Most of the big lakes have a volunteer or two or three. We're trying to get more volunteers on the smaller lakes. We don't know very much about how those lakes operate. Are they more susceptible to changes in land use in the watershed? Are they less susceptible?"

He emphasized that volunteers are very important and the data that they collect is very valuable. "The other benefit is that people get a whole new understanding of their lake. They have a much greater understanding of water quality, what triggers algae blooms and how their lake works," he said.

Because the MPCA needs about 10 years of data before they can analyze it for trends, much of the information collected by Secchi disk volunteers is just starting to become available. The DNR has linked to the information on its "Lake Finder" website:  
<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html>

All you have to do is enter in the name of the lake and the county and, if the data is available, you can see its water quality graphed out on your computer.

But all of these databases and graphs never could be possible without the important data collected by volunteers like Nancy Ellsworth. Ellsworth says she and her neighbors volunteer because she feels a responsibility to the lake she lives on.

"We don't want our lakes to become like the ones in the Twin Cities," said Ellsworth. "People in the southern part of the state haven't taken care of their lakes."

*Individuals or groups wishing to volunteer for the Citizen Lake Monitoring Program can contact Natural Resource Technician Noel Greece at the Soil and Water Conservation office by calling (218) 326-0017.*

## SECCHI DISK READINGS

Here is a list of the diligent people who are taking Secchi disk readings in 2000:

TN	Bill Berg	Trout North
TS	Betty and Harold Unger	Trout South
IN	Betty and Harold Unger	Interlachen or Little Trout
BN	George T. Klacan	Bluewater North
BS	Nancy Ellsworth	Bluewater South
WW	Duane M. Amundson	Wabana Wakeman's Bay
WN	Kenneth Zimmer	Wabana North
WC	Mary Gephart	Wabana Central
WS	Susan Lick	Wabana South
LW	Cheryl Adams	Little Wabana

When you see them, we hope you will tell them how much you appreciate the work they are doing for the Chain of Lakes and for Minnesota lakes in general! When we have a few years' data of this caliber, we will be able to tell if particular places need greater attention, or that we are doing well with our water. Remember what this measures—how far down in the water you can see the disk. If you can't see very far, it's because something gets in the way; and the usual thing in the way is tiny microscopic algae.

<b>YEAR 2000 SECCHI DISK READINGS THROUGH THE FIRST OF AUGUST</b>											
BASIN:	WK#	TN	TS	IN	BN	BS	WW	WN	WC	WS	LW
04/23-04/29	1				13.0						
05/07-05/13	2				13.5						
05/14-05/20	3	21.0	17.0	15.0	18.5						
05/21-05/27	4				21.5					15.0	
05/28-06/03	5				21.0						
06/04-06/10	6		18.0	16.0	19.5		16.0			15.0	
06/11-06/17	7	21.0					16.5			15.0	
06/18-06/24	8		21.0	17.0	17.0	17.0	16.5			17.5	
06/25-07/01	9	23.5			21.5	21.5		21.0	22.0		
07/02-07/08	10	23.5	22.0	18.0	20.0		15.0		19.5	18.0	17.5
07/09-07/15	11		15.0	18.0		22.0	14.5	20.0	19.0	19.0	17.0
07/16-07/22	12		14.5	17.0	19.5	22.0	15.0			19.0	15.0
07/23-07/29	13	17.0			19.5	19.0	15.0		17.0	17.0	
07/30-08/05	14	15.5	12.0	17.0	16.0				16.5		13.5

### EARLY LAND OWNERSHIP

*A friend long gone, Bill Adams, gave a typewritten copy of the following to Deborah Gelbach, about 1978. Bill lived nearly every summer of his long life (died about 1980) on Arrowhead Point, growing up in his father's (Will Adams) Cliff House, since torn down. Bill was a banker in Bloomington, Indiana in the winters, but by inclination he was a naturalist and historian, interested in everything—a Renaissance Man. He collected information about the area, by study and by talking with people, and he gave copies of most of the written information to Deborah Gelbach toward the end of his life. This is a copy of a typewritten draft, which I have copied verbatim:*

#### History of Land Ownership in the Wabana & Hanson Creeks Recreation Area of Itasca County, Minnesota.

##### History compiled by Sidney Rommel, June 1975.

To understand why this land is as it is today, we [must] know what has happened to it in the past. Two essential steps for this land to come into private ownership:

1. The Chippewa tribe on Feb. 28, 1859, ceded their right of occupancy to this area along with much of north central Minnesota.
2. A surveyor, Nathan Butler, under contract to the Government Land Office, on Sept. 6, 1872 commenced the subdivision of Township 57N Range 25W [now Wabana Township], and on that date established the section lines and corners in this tract. He described the area as rolling, with 3<sup>rd</sup> rate soil and timbered with birch,

poplar, fir, pine and tamarack. The stream from the Hanson Lakes was described as 20 links wide (13 feet), about 12 or 15 inches deep with sandy bottom and sluggish current. From the field notes it can be deducted that Wabana Creek was about 100 feet wide. Also mentioned was an Indian trail running NW and SE just west of the creek, and only a few hundred feet outside the boundaries of the tract.

While the surveyor made no special mention of good stands and didn't use pine for any of the witness trees on this tract, the pine stands in the tract in Sec. 23 must have been very good. All of the descriptions within the tract in Sec. 23 [Wabana Creek runs through this section] and Sec. 24 [Hanson Creek runs through this section] were filed on for purchase on April 23, 1873 which was likely the first date or very close to the first date these three lands were made available for purchase @ \$1.25 an acre or for homestead. Three different purchasers, Julia Aitkin, Sr., a spinster, Charles Donovan and Hazain Leduc, made their applications for purchase on that date. And all received their U. S. patent on Oct. 1, 1873, signed by President U. S. Grant. And all plus nine others in the immediate vicinity sold their yet to be purchased 160 acres of land for \$450 to Lorenzo D. Day on March 12, 1873, more than a month before they had made their preliminary arrangements to buy the land. Prior to any transaction the original purchaser had granted power of attorney to John W. Day. On Jan. 20, 1872, in the case of Julia Aitkin, Sr. This document states that she authorizes Day to sell land or timber which she may enter @ \$1.25 an acre. Charles Donovan Granted power or attorney to John W. Day on Feb. 6, 1873.

Under the existing law the above practice was illegal. "It was a bold and impudent fraud practiced upon a generous nation" (Wm. Watts Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*). "In the rough ethics of the pioneers a process so extensively operated, so rarely denounced, and tolerated by the govern-

ment and by government officials seemed not to be so very wrong. There was little sense of guilt. Indeed so numerous and influential were those engaged in the operation that they seemed not merely innocent but positively meritorious" (Page 104 in *Minnesota Lands*).

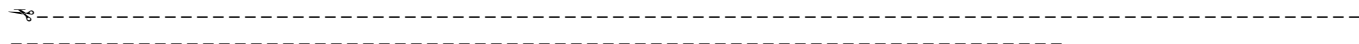
On a sale where land was sold for delinquent taxes held in Brainerd on Sept. 29, 1881, these lands were sold along with many other descriptions, a total of 6626.36 acres, for \$102.23. Later, the Day family cleared their titles.

On Mar. 29, 1892 Laura L. Day agreed to sell the Mercht pine stumpage on part of this tract included in a total of approx. 800 acres plus an undivided half of an additional 200 acres for \$1449.00 to J. P. Sims of Minneapolis, the logging to be completed by April 1, 1895.

However, from Rottsolk's history of Itasca County, *Pines, Mines and Lakes*,<sup>1</sup> one infers that most of the pine in this area had already been cut by then. This further borne out by the stated price of \$1449. Stumpage at that time was usually \$5.00 /m for white pine and \$4/m for Norway pine. So that this price paid would have been only enough for one good 40 acre tract. Speaking of the 1870's Rottsolk says, "For several years Wes Day and his crews had little competition around Wabana and further north; they logged off only the clearest and straightest pine; they made the most of the Prairie River Road."

(continued on page 8)

<sup>1</sup> Rottsolk, James E., 1960, *Pines, Mines and Lakes, the story of Itasca County, Minnesota*, Itasca County Historical Society.



**DUES, CONTRIBUTION, AND CHAIN LETTER SUBSCRIPTION**

The WCOLA fiscal year 2000 begins July 1 and runs through June 30, so if you have not paid for 2000, you are now delinquent. Note: Dues for the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association have remained the same \$20 from the beginning, decades ago. Meanwhile our expenses reflect the rising tide. If you want to make an additional contribution, please feel free to do so, and check below. *Chain Letter* subscription will not be used until January 1, 2001, by Association action.

~ Regular 2000 Dues \$20.00 ~ Contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_ ~  
Chain Letter subscription \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Optional, for testing etc.)  
(Unchanged since organization) (Members make no further payment)  
Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address #1, permanent  
City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_  
Code:\_\_\_\_\_ Which months of the year for mailing?

Address #2, seasonal, optional  
City\_\_\_\_\_ State:\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_  
Code:\_\_\_\_\_ Which months of the year for mailing?

Please mail to: Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer, 36542  
Havenwood Drive,  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744



The history of the other descriptions is similar. Price Brothers operating pine logging camps on the Hanson Lakes acquired some of the land. The Pillsburys, famous names in Minnesota logging, mining and milling history owned several of these descriptions. None of them ever had a legitimate homesteader or settler who tried to make his living from farming. This may explain why much of the tract apparently only burned over once, likely soon after the pine was logged. Certainly this tract was not subjected to the often repeated fires that destroy soil fertility and wipe out pine. After the land was logged, it passed into the hands of speculators. Several tracts were sold to individuals who held them until their deaths, when the lands became delinquent. All of the tracts have the county auditor's certificate that they were delinquent in the 1926 judgment.

### **CLEARWATER SCHOOLHOUSE**

To the right is a snapshot that I took in 1935, of the old Clearwater Schoolhouse, which stood where the Town Hall now stands. The Downing family had built our summer cabin in 1932, the log cabin where the Gepharts live now, and my grandfather, dog Prince and I had no doubt gone to the corner for mail. Our mailbox was located kittycorner from the schoolhouse, and was on the Bovey Star Route. I was 13 years old, and had a box camera, and took lots of pictures, but this is the only one I know about that shows the school.

**NOTICE PLEASE!  
THE WABANA CHAIN OF  
LAKES ASSOCIATION WILL  
HOLD ITS REGULAR MEETING  
ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER  
9, 2000, AT 9:00 A. M.  
ALL MEMBERS ARE URGED TO  
ATTEND.**



**Clearwater Schoolhouse**