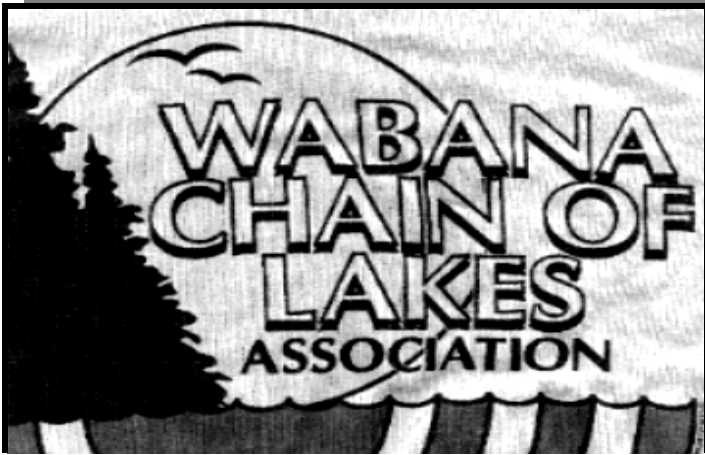


# The Chain Letter

Of the



**August 2001**

Volume 5, Number 4

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Officers:

President: Dick Chambers 326-2809  
Vice President: Bud Sage 326-4535  
Treasurer: Cathy Rudolph 327-0820  
Secretary: Susan Lick 326-6837

Advisory Committee.

All the above, plus:

Nancy Ellsworth 326-8056  
Roger Pierce 327-2142  
David Lick 326-6837  
Joel Soloman 326-5177  
Steve Bryant 326-5473  
John Adams 326-2206  
John Zimmerman 326-1020

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**FROM PRESIDENT CHAMBERS:**

Our July 21st WCOLA meeting was very interesting to say the least. Joe Waleski spoke of his vast experiences at the Joyce Estate. He showed a video and shared a lot of his personal memories, and answered questions. This was a great experience for us all, to hear about one of the most talked about places on this chain of lakes.

John Zimmerman has agreed to replace Harold Unger on the Advisory Board. His number is 326- 1020. Now we have one adviser from each of the five lakes. We are still looking for at least one more from a township lake not from our chain. If interested Please contact me at 236-2809.

Our next WCOLA meeting will be on the 18th of August. Bill Berg **was** to have a program on logging roads, but we will ask him to present his program at a later date, due to a pressing priority: Our Lake Management team has completed the training, and at our meeting we will be discussing the "visioning" that came up at the training session. We plan to employ a facilitator to help in the process. Please join us at 8:30-9:00 for coffee and the meeting at 9:00.

Thanks, Dick

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**July 7, 2001**

**Members Present:** Bud Sage, David Lick, Dick Chambers, Nancy Ellsworth, George Wilburt, and Steve Bryant. **Absent:** Roger Pierce, Joel Solomon, and Cathy Rudolph.

**Newsletter: Deadline is August 6<sup>th</sup> send to [wdowning@uslink.net](mailto:wdowning@uslink.net) or 38067 Forest Lane, Grand Rapids 55744.**

**Open and welcome:** Chair Dick Chambers opened the meeting by welcoming Steve Bryant as the newest advisory member.

**Advisory Members:** Dick Chambers reported confirmations from John Zimmerman, Big Trout Lake to replace Harold Unger, John Adams will represent Little Wabana and Roger Pierce has asked to be replaced. Following discussion it was agreed to look for Roger's replacement from one of the lakes within Wabana Township, other than the chain of lakes.

**Next Regular Lake Association Meeting:** August 18<sup>th</sup>. Cathy Rudolph & Nancy Ellsworth – coffee and eats.

Proposed agenda:

- Program – Joe Waleski on the Joyce Estate including a 45-minute video, an article has been printed in the Grand Rapids Herald Review inviting the public.
- Bill Berg will present the program on August 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Program presenter's gifts were suggested by Bud Sage and will be brought to the membership for ideas.
- Recognition of milfoil awareness coordinators and volunteers.
- Introduction of all advisory members past and present.
- Itasca County Lake Management Planning Coalition grant and volunteer update.
- Septic system project update and volunteer recognition.
- Core sample, lake-testing response to Art Norton will be read. The letter requests sampling two lakes on the Wabana Chain of Lakes.
- Annual Picnic July 28<sup>th</sup>: Pat Chambers and Nancy Ellsworth co-coordinators, advisory members are needed to help at the picnic.

**Bluewater Camps:** Nancy Ellsworth talked with the camp director of the Bluewater Covenant Bible Camp and suggested it would be beneficial to have them discuss their camp operations with the advisory and membership. Nancy also talked with the Campfire Camp Director. Following discussion advisory members agreed to request meetings with both camps in the near future, as an ongoing communication effort.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Lick, secretary

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

July 21,2001

The meeting was opened at 9am by president Dick Chambers with the introduction of Susan Hawkinson, member and local writer. Susan introduced Joe Waleski, former employee of the Joyce family.

Joe was born in 1920 and his father began employment with The Joyce Family at their Big Trout Lake Estate in 1926. Joe explained the family tree and how the earlier family of David and then William Joyce purchased huge tracts of land in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Massive logging efforts, railroads and mills were developed.

Sons Stanley and David completed the Joyce Estate in the early 30's. Started as a hunting camp the estate developed as a May to September recreation and entertainment site for family and friends. Following the death of the last resident Beatrice Joyce, The Joyce Estate was sold in 1973 to The Nature Conservancy then The U.S. Forest Service.

Joe presented a videotape of the Joyce Family consisting of photos and names of people and places. At a future date Susan Hawkinson's book on The Joyce Estate will be available. Members and guests requested copies of the video, which is not available at this time. Joe was thanked for a fun, informative presentation.

**President Dick Chambers opened the regular business meeting** at 10:45am with 55 members and guests present.

**Minutes of May 19 & June 16<sup>th</sup>.** A motion was made by Bill Downing to accept the minutes as read, in the June and July newsletters. Joel Solomon seconded. Motion carried.

**Treasurers Report:** Cathy Rudolph read the treasurers Report.

Balance as of 6-16-01	\$3,484.05
Received	
Dues	\$ 820.00
contributions	\$ 70.00
contributions – lake testing	<u>\$ 50.00</u>
Total Received:	\$ 940.00
Paid Out:	
Printing	\$ 148.83
Stamps	<u>\$ 110.50</u>
Total Paid Out:	\$ 259.33
Balance as of 7-21-01	\$ 4164.72
Paid Households for 2001	68

**Annual Picnic** for the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association families will be July 28<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at the Wabana Township Hall. Chairs, Pat Chambers and Nancy Ellsworth explained the association would provide brats and hot dogs, bring a dish to share. Door prizes will be for paid members only.

**Advisory Committee Representation** was reported on by Dick Chambers. Advisory members were introduced as well as new members Steve Bryant - Bluewater Lake, John Adams - Little Wabana, John Zimmerman - Big Trout Lake. Dick noted that Roger Pierce would no longer be able to serve. Discussion from the advisory meeting suggested

finding representation from one of the lakes in Wabana Township, other than the chain of lakes.

**Itasca County Lake Management Planning Coalition** was reported on by Gib Wilson. The first meeting of the planning sessions was Friday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. The focus was on group communication leading to developing a plan of lake management. Representing the Wabana Chain of Lakes were George Klacan, Nancy Ellsworth, Gib Willson, David Lick, Dick Chambers, Cathy Rudolph and George Wilbert.

**Core Sample Testing:** Dick Chambers reviewed the proposed core sampling by the Department of Natural Resources requesting the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association to participate with other select lake associations, in a limnology-boring test at a cost of \$1,000. Bob Sage, stating our interest in participation and requesting an additional core sampling, composed a letter draft. The letter was reviewed by the advisory committee and read to the membership by Dick Chambers, then sent to Art Norton at the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation Department.

**Milfoil Awareness** was carried out by volunteers over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. Coordinators Bud Sage and David Lick introduced the on site volunteers at the boat landings: Jack Velzen, Bob and Mary Gephart, Roger Linder, Ken Zimmer, Cathy and Tia Rudolph, George Klacan, Bob Sage, Joel Solomon. The group suggested the association pursue larger milfoil awareness signs be placed at the boat landings.

**Septic System Inspection** project update by David Lick stated that to date 19 households have volunteered with 3 more pending. The project is good prevention, the lakes are not in crisis, reminded David. Volunteers were thanked for being good stewards. Starting next year Itasca County will be doing site inspections on the chain at the owners' cost. This year's voluntary owners inspection costs are being covered by Itasca County.

John Zimmerman asked if Balsam Township had been part of the process as some of the Big Trout Lake area is in Balsam Township. Dave responded the lake association, Wabana Township and Itasca County Commissioners, formally supported the program. John offered to work with Balsam Township to bring them up to date on the project.

**Other:** Bob Sage thanked all who contributed to the Bluewater roads dust control project.

Bill Berg suggested those interested in history look at their land abstracts as a source. Bill will get a web site to Bill Downing for the newsletter, on land abstract information.

Bill Berg also mentioned that The Minnesota DNR Loon Surveys showed a decrease in adult loons counted and a substantial decrease in loon chicks counted this year. Decreases in loons might be from stress, loss of habitat and disturbed nesting areas. The survey did not include Wabana Chain of Lakes. Members also suggested there had been sightings of a gray or arctic loon on the chain of lakes.

**The next meeting** will host Bill Berg presenting "Trout Lake Logging Camps". Saturday August 18 at The Wabana Township Hall, 8:30am social program 9am and meeting to follow.

**Adjournment:** Bill Downing moved the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30am

Respectfully submitted, Susan Lick secretary

#### **LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Bill. Will take you up on using email. This last weekend I attended an antique outboard motor show at a small lake just south of here in another county. The area was what I would call "old time lake shore development. Small lots, lots of congestion, multiple family back lot development with community easements to the lake plus lots of old boats, cars, unused docks and other unused lake shore recreational materials stacked about. While parking my trailer the host asked me to be sure not to run over the white plastic pipe about 50' long, half buried in the ground at a 90 degree angle from the mobile home he uses as a guest cabin. "No problem" sez I but, "May I ask why you have a pipe half buried in such a conspicuous place?" He proudly replied " That's my septic system for the cabin, the bottom of the pipe is seriated allowing water to drain before it goes into the 55 gallon drum. Kind of a leech field in reverse". Planning? Zoning? Enforcement? Public Health Department involvement? This may be an example of what could happen in Itasca County if we are not proactive in enforcing our ordinances. Thanks again for all your efforts and time. Bob Sage

*Many thanks, Bob! It calls up an awful mental picture, but it sure gets the point across!*

## SEPTIC SYSTEMS INSPECTION AND REPLACEMENT

The Wabana Chain of Lakes Association, Wabana Township and Itasca County make up a pioneer team in instituting township-wide septic system inspection, providing inspection without the usual fee, and low-interest 3% loan money, if replacement is necessary. Ten households signed up for the first year (2000) inspection, and of those, three were found compliant and seven were found noncompliant, to be replaced within two years.

Several householders in 1999 and 2000 had decided that their systems needed replacing, and without entering the agreement, went ahead with replacement. Others will be going ahead with replacement without entering the agreement, in the next year or two.

These people are true stewards of the waters, and deserve to be placed on the Honor Roll of the Association.

This list of volunteers was delivered to Terry Greenside on July 26th. The county has already sent out the paperwork they need signed, and they

are going to let bids on the inspections, to be held in August and September.

This is the last year can sign up volunteers for this phase of the program, but the effort to get all septic systems in the Township compliant will continue in some form. The County Commissioners and County employees now are convinced that we are capable of organizing people on a grass roots level. We hope for a meeting in late fall, with Commissioners and Zoning people, to determine how to proceed next year, and it would be good to have a number of people from the Association as well.

Our goal may be to complete all of the inspections in the Township—or even county-wide—next year, and our Association may be the group that can sell it to the County.

### THIS YEAR'S HONOR ROLL:

#### Previously reported, 18 inspections to be completed:

- Duane Amundson household, Wabana Lake, 2 systems
- Betty Bunge household, Wabana Lake
- Peter Friedlieb household, Wabana Lake
- Susan Hawkinson household, Bluewater Lake
- Dorothy and Dick Klinger household, Wabana Lake
- Bob Moore household, Wabana Lake 2 systems
- Cathy Rudolph household, Wabana Lake
- Bud Sage household, Bluewater Lake
- Wa-Ga-Tha-Ka, Doug and Jon Miner families, Wabana Lake, 8 systems.

#### Six systems added this month:

- Dick and Jeanne Burke household, Wabana Lake
- Jerry and Emmy Larson, 3 cabins on Birch Bay, Wabana Lake.
- Art and Trudy Patton household, Little Wabana Lake
- Ted and Swanny Voneida household, Bluewater Lake

### 2001 SECCHI DISK READINGS

LAKE BASIN	WEEK	BN	BS	IN	LW	TN	TS	WC	WN	WS	WW
	<b>WEEK 1</b>									12.0	
<b>M</b>	<b>WEEK 2</b>	13.0			10.0				12.5	14.0	
<b>A</b>	<b>WEEK 3</b>					17.5					
<b>Y</b>	<b>WEEK 4</b>	16.0			12.5	22.0			16.5	14.0	
<b>J</b>	<b>WEEK 1</b>	22.0	22.0		12.5	24.5	19.0		19.0	14.0	
<b>U</b>	<b>WEEK 2</b>	22.0	22.0	19.0	23.5		20.0	18.0	17.0	17.0	
<b>N</b>	<b>WEEK 3</b>	27.0	26.0					17.5	20.0	15.5	15.5
<b>E</b>	<b>WEEK 4</b>	25.5	25.5	19.0	19.5	25.5	20.0	20.5	19.0		15.5
<b>J</b>	<b>WEEK 1</b>	25.0	23.5	19.0		24.0	21.0	19.5		18.0	
<b>U</b>	<b>WEEK 2</b>	22.0	17.0	19.0	16.0	19.0	17.0	19.0	17.5	17.0	15.5
<b>L</b>	<b>WEEK 3</b>	16.5	16.0	19.0		14.0	13.0	19.0		16.0	15.0
<b>Y</b>	<b>WEEK 4</b>				18.0	14.5			14.0	14.0	

Those diligent Secchi disk readers are hard at work this year, again, keeping track of the transparency of our water basins. The results are at the bottom of page 4. If you want to know whom to thank for this work in our behalf, here are their names:

BN, George Klakan. BS, Nancy Ellsworth, also the person in charge of the project. IN, Harold and Betty Unger. LW, Cheryl Adams. TN, Bill Berg. TS, Betty and Harold Unger. WC, Mary Gephart. WN, Ken Zimmer in May & June; Bill Downing and Richard Brasch in July. WS, Susan Lick. WW, Duane Amundson.

# Visioning Session

IMPORTANT PLANNING MEETING FOR ALL WCOL MEMBERS  
AND ALL CITIZENS OF THIS AREA:

Saturday, August 18, 2001

9:00 a. m., at the Wabana Town Hall

As part of the Itasca Healthy Lakes Program, our meeting on August 18 will be devoted to first steps in developing a lake management plan. It is important to attend and be part of this process.

The Association will employ a professional facilitator for the meeting, in order to arrive at the best consensus with the least amount of lost time. Your time will be well used, and your viewpoints will be heard.

The focus areas will include the following:

- Water quality
- Fisheries management plans
- Aquatic vegetation
- Wildlife
- Exotic species
- Land use and zoning
- Managing water surface use conflicts
- Public water access

Eight other Lake Associations of this area will be doing the same thing, working at evaluating their conditions, their lake use, possible problems, and then striving with definite plans and goals toward managing our lakes over time to sustain their long-term health and viability.

With ever-increasing recreational use and growing populations residing near and along waterways, lakes can suffer from small and

large cumulative impacts, and soon get beyond their capacity for natural control and cleansing. Lakes to the south of us have been used up, and people from there are coming north to enjoy our quiet clear waters. With a good early management plan, we can maintain our water quality and the value of our property.

Lake management requires the collective resources of all its citizens, local, county, and state governments, and commercial enterprises. Cooperation, collaboration, and a willingness to change are the prime ingredients for success. It is important for YOU to be part of the process!

## 2001 WCOLA MEMBERS

*This is current as of August 9, 2001, as far as the editor knows. If your name is here, you have paid your 2001-2 dues; if it is not here, please send a check with the coupon on page 7. We will publish an addendum to the list in September, to include the names of those who are omitted. Please notify me, preferably by e-mail, of any errors or changes you want to have made in your listing!*

Lloyd & Vicki Adams	Wabana Lake
Pat & Jan Adams	Bluewater Lake
Elmer Bekkedahl	Bluewater Lake
Craig & Cindy Bender	Wabana Lake
Bill & Helena Berg	Trout Lake
Bill & Mary Fran Bottoms	Bluewater Lake
Rich Brasch & Carole Schmidt	Wabana Lake
Steve & Lynette Bryant	Bluewater Lake
Dan & Jeanne Burke	Wabana Lake
Gary & Carol Burkholder	Wabana Lake
Dick & Pat Chambers	Wabana Lake
George & Libby Colburn	Wabana Lake
Kevin & Donna Costello	Bluewater Lake
Stanley & Mary Lou Craig	Wabana Lake
Ed & Helen Dettmer	Pickerel Lake
Fred & Kathy Doty	Wabana Lake
Bill & Betsy Downing	Wabana Lake
John & Marcia Downing	Wabana Lake
Nancy Ellsworth	Bluewater Lake
Ted Ellsworth	St. Louis Park, MN
Terry & Jerri Engleman	Wabana Lake
Karl & Pat Fischer	Trout Lake
Michael & Barb Fleischhacker	Wabana Lake
Focus 1000	Aitkin, MN
Dr. Peter & Chris Friedlieb	Wabana Lake
Gordon & Lynnette Fuller	Bluewater Lake
Phil & Deborah Gelbach	Wabana Lake
Bob & Bonnie Halver	Wabana Lake
Rick & Vicky Harding	Trout Lake
Pete & Carol Harris	Doan Lake
Louis & Barbara Ireton	Trout Lake
Dave Johnson	Wabana Lake
Karl Kaukis	Bluewater Lake
George & Mary Lou Klacan	Bluewater Lake
Dennis & Jean Koewler	Wabana Lake
Ken & Deb Kruger	Wabana Lake
Steven & Chick Laitman/Wabayo Resort	Wabana Lake
Bill & Patricia Langenbrunner	Wabana Lake
Danielle Larsen	Wabana Lake
Jerald & Emma Larson	Wabana Lake
David & Susan Lick	Wabana Lake

Bill & Kathy Linder	Bluewater Lake
Roger & Nancy Linder	Wabana Lake
Robert & Mae Long	Wabana Lake
Bill & Cathy Louden	Bluewater Lake
Morton & Marian Lovelace	Wabana Lake
John Lukins	Wabana Lake
Jim & Pat Maijala	Bluewater Lake
Richard & Nancy Massaro	Island Lake
Mark McCullough	Wabana Lake
Steven & Pat Mead	Little Trout Lake
Arthur & Margaret Merrill/Morris	Wabana Lake
Doug & Ellen Miner	Wabana Lake
Irma Moore	Wabana Lake
Dorothy Myrick	Wabana Lake
David & Judy Nybakken	Bluewater Lake
Paul & Barb Oberg	Wabana Lake
Jim & Gail Olijnek	Wabana Lake
Roger & Nola Pierce	Wabana Lake
Jim & Sue Ries	Bluewater Lake
Cathy Rudolph	Wabana Lake
Mark & Cynthia Rudolph Lavalier	Wabana Lake
Dr. Bill & Diane Rutherford	Bluewater Lake
Bob & Ruth Sage	Bluewater Lake
Bud & Mary Lou Sage	Bluewater Lake
David Sage	Forest Lake, MN
Stuart W. Sage	Centerton, AR
Frederick & Joan Schnitzler	Middle Hanson Lake
Wayne Sherer	Wabana Lake
Bruce & Diane Smith	Bluewater Lake
Dave Snuggerud	Wabana Lake
Joel & Jan Solomon	Little Trout Lake
Scott & Jan Stein	Wabana Lake
Joe & Martha Stevens	Bluewater Lake
Clifford Timm	West St. Paul, MN
Harold & Betty Unger	Trout Lake
Jack & Sally Velzen	Wabana Lake
Ted & Swanny Voneida	Bluewater Lake
Pamela Wassberg Whittenbury	Little Trout Lake
Merrill & Marlene Widmark	Wabana Lake
George & Delores Wilbert	Wabana Lake
George & Sally Wilbur	Wabana Lake
Louis Williams	Wabana Lake
Gib & Kathleen Willson	Wabana Lake
Gig & Kristen Willson	Wabana Lake
Bill Jr. & Donna Wolf	Trout Lake
Dave & Karen Wooden	Bluewater Lake
Ken Jr. & Barbara Zimmer	Wabana Lake
Susannah Zimmer	Wabana Lake
John & Charlotte Zimmerman	Trout Lake
James & Marie Zimmerman	Trout Lake

## BOAT LOADS OF FISH - BUT WHAT KIND?

The Chain Letter published a letter from Jack Velzen last month, in which he proposed writing an article on catch-and-release fishing in our Chain. Several members said they would like to hear more, so here is Jack's article, a little edited so I could get it in this month:

"Remember the 'good ol days' when you could catch Northerns as big as your leg?" "Yeah!, - but what I really want is a limit of 2 lb. Walleyes." "Nah! - Walleyes are over-rated in Minnesota. You haven't had a good day fishing until you get into the hot action of catching a bunch of big Bluegills." "Well, I think Bass are the most fun to catch. Everyone knows Smallmouth are the scrappiest fish going!"

Lots of different opinions. Lots of different preferences. Lots of different choices to make! I had the opportunity to learn a good deal in recent weeks, about the latest DNR Fisheries survey of Wabana conducted in the summer of 2000, and what that means for the future of fishing in the Wabana Chain. It poses some interesting dilemmas and choices. I'll try to explain a bit of what I learned here. The place to start is to ask yourself, "What do I want and expect from the fishing opportunities in the Chain?" Not all answers are compatible.

Since Walleyes seem to be king in Minnesota, I'll start with them. The Wabana Chain - at its best - could only maintain a very minimal Walleye population, if any at all. That the Chain currently produces Walleyes is probably mostly the result of DNR stocking of fingerlings. There are many reasons for this, not all scientifically confirmed and still open to debate, but it boils down to three main possibilities - spawning habitat, food and food. It is uncertain how successful natural reproduction is in Wabana, and if it even occurs. Since the lakes are deep and warm up slowly, it is uncertain microscopic food for Walleye fry would even have developed by the time natural spawning produced Walleye fry. That is one of the main reasons the DNR stocks fingerlings. The other 'food': Since the Perch population is relatively low (in the bottom 25% when compared to similar lakes), and Perch are one of the main forage fish for Walleyes, even if spawning success was good, would there be enough forage as the fish grew larger? So, basically, the Walleyes you catch are Walleyes that were stocked as fingerlings through DNR management.

How about Northerns? The Wabana Chain has historically been, and continues to be, good for Northerns. The average size of Northerns is exceptionally high when compared to lakes of the same type. The number of Northerns is relatively low, however, when doing that comparison. That is usually the case, according to the DNR. You have fewer nice size fish for the habitat available, or a much greater number of small fish. The reason for the relatively low quantity of large fish is again somewhat subject to debate. Basically, spawning habitat for Northerns is good, but not extensive, so that may limit the quantity. A more likely explanation is that maintaining a relatively large average size population of Northerns tends to limit the number of small fish that reach large sizes so the total numbers are less. Removing large fish 'makes room' for smaller fish, and once there are lots of small ones, there is no 'room' for large ones to develop.

What about Largemouth Bass? Here is where the Chain shines. Largemouth Bass, in comparison to other similar lakes, are far and away the most abundant. There is plenty of good spawning habitat, and good feed. Since Largemouth Bass tend to feed more heavily on sunfish, and there are abundant sunfish in Wabana (although a bit smaller than average by comparison to other similar lakes), all the requirements for success are there for Largemouth Bass. There seems to be no limiting factor for them. Is there a downside to Largemouth Bass and fishing? Yes! If this Chain can support a fixed number of pounds of Bass per acre, the choice becomes, "Would you rather have 20 small ones filling up those pounds, or 3 or 4 big ones?" We run the risk of having an abundance of small size Largemouth Bass with very few large ones if the larger ones disappear or are removed through fishing. Through their abundance, small fish would fill up the Largemouth Bass niche, and prevent growth to larger sizes.

Last but not least, the Smallmouth Bass. The Chain shows better than average Smallmouth numbers and size when compared to similar lakes. The population - the total numbers - are significantly less than Largemouth however, and rather small in comparison. This population has been self maintaining, but there are not huge quantities.

*(continued on page 8)*

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### PAYMENT AND CONTRIBUTION COUPON

Regular 2001-02 Dues \$20.00 (Unchanged since 1988)  Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Testing, etc.)

Name(s) as you want to be listed \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Which months of the year for mailing? \_\_\_\_\_

Seasonal Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Which months of the year for mailing? \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form and your \$20.00 check for 2001-2 dues, 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

So what does all of this mean? That depends on what you want. To me, this mostly points out the key role of catch and release fishing to maintain a quality fishery on the Wabana Chain. While I enjoy a fish meal like most, keeping the larger fish, or in some cases, any fish at all of a particular species, will have a negative effect on the fishery. For Northerns, keeping larger fish will tend to degrade the quality (average size) of the fishery without making room for significantly greater numbers. Any increase in numbers would be small fish, and tend to suppress or prevent the development of larger fish. The more large fish that are caught and kept, the sooner and faster this would occur. For walleyes, keeping any fish will simply reduce overall numbers of catchable fish because there is no significant means to replace them other than stocking. For Largemouth, removing larger fish will tend to create a situation of many but stunted, smaller fish. Because Largemouth reproduce so successfully in Wabana, many small ones will be produced to take the place of one large fish which is caught and kept.

For Smallmouth, removing larger fish, and basically any fish, will reduce the total numbers of an already small

total population, possibly to the point where the total numbers would be considered to be too few to bother fishing for.

The best plan for catch and keep fishing? In my opinion, keep small Northerns (less than 24"), small Largemouth Bass (less than 10"), and sparingly, a small Walleye or two (18" or less) to eat. But then again, my choice would be to catch fewer, bigger fish rather than many small fish. What is your preference? Blending many different preferences is not always easy.

*I expect to receive email comments on this article, agreeing or disagreeing, on this interesting subject. There is lots of room for debate here! Next month, if space permits, we'll have a second article by Jack, entitled "Shrinking Sunnies." Also next month we will have a wonderful underwater puzzle photograph from John Downing, and maybe a picture of the Wabana dam of about 1910.*

**URGENT MESSAGE TO MEMBERS AND OTHERS: PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND THE "VISIONING SESSION" ON SATURDAY AUGUST 18 AT 9:00 A.M. AT THE WABANA TOWN HALL. SEE PAGE 5 FOR DETAILS.**

## **Wabana Chain of Lakes Association**

**Cathy Rudolph, Treasurer  
38542 Havenwood Drive  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744**



