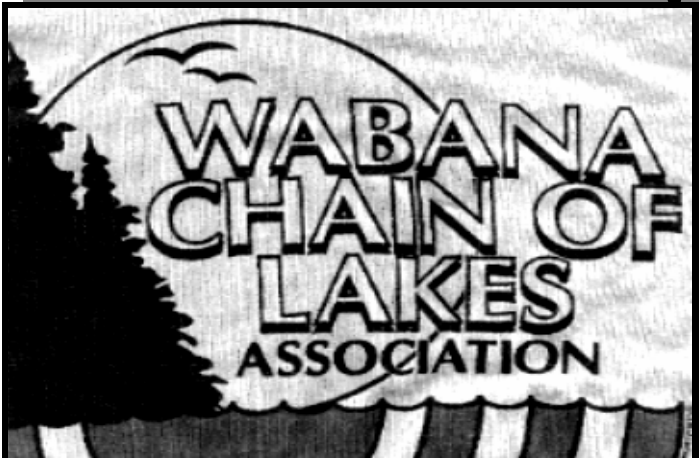


The Chain Letter of the



Dedicated to the care and preservation of our lakes, for the enjoyment and safety of all

June 2007

Volume 11, Number 2

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Visit our web site www.wcola.org
Add your items to it by sending to Mark Miner,
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To have your Chain Letter sent to you by
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MEETING DATE REMINDER

Repeated from last month, for those who may have missed it.

Meetings are held the third Saturday of each summer month, 8:30 A. M. for coffee, then program at 9:00 and business meeting at 10:00. You should not expect to receive a separate notice a week in advance for each meeting. Instead, let this be your notice, and please mark your calendars right now while you are thinking of it:

June 16

July 21 (picnic date, different timing)

August 18

September 15

I will continue to try getting a newsletter to you ahead of time, but this is pretty tight. The deadlines for copy for future newsletters are July 12, August 9, September 6.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our lake association is now into the swing of summer. You may have noticed a group of people cleaning up along our area roads in the past few days. It is a few volunteers from the Lake Association. We clean up along the area roads in the spring and again in the fall. If you would like to be included in the group, we will let everyone know when we will do it again. It can be fun and productive.

The Association has talked about water safety. The last few years we have had some accidents and drownings in Minnesota lakes. We have been very fortunate not to have had any on our lakes. We should all take notice and use extreme caution when using the water. Please remember to wear life jackets

Come and join us on June 16th for our next association meeting, and don't forget our picnic on July 21st. It's a great opportunity to visit with your neighbors. Thanks, Dick

**Wabana Chain of Lakes Association
Minutes of the May 19, 2007 Meeting**

Program: Program Committee member Susan Hawkinson introduced Mary Shideler “The Kayak Lady”. Mary explained her quest to paddle all of the lakes in Itasca County, she has paddled 822. Susan Hawkinson presented her with a W.C.O.L.A. coffee mug.

Business Meeting: President Dick Chambers called the meeting to order with 35 members in attendance. A written agenda was presented for the meeting.

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting of September 16th, 2006 were approved as read.

Treasurer’s report, as read by Jean Koewler was approved.

Balance as of September 16, 2007 \$4,182.23

Receipts:

Dues	\$ 80.00
Contributions Betsy Downing	\$ 100.00
Denim Shirt Sales	\$ 97.36
Total Received	\$ 277.36

Disbursements:

Barbara Zimmer (fall road clean-up picnic supplies)	\$ 22.84
Fanfare promotions (six denim shirts)	\$ 178.65
Lauren Sage (postage to mail shirt)	\$ 4.36
Stamps (May newsletter 300 stamps)	\$ 123.00

Total Disbursements: \$ 328.85

Balance as of May 18, 2007 \$4,130.74

Total Paid Households: 2007 to date: 9

Wabana Township Road Clean up: On June 7th volunteers will meet at the township hall at 9:00am. Barbara Zimmer, project coordinator called for volunteers. George Klacan will pick up supplies from Itasca County. David Lick of Itasca Reliable Insurance Agency will sponsor the hot dog picnic.

Wabana Township Zoning Committee: Steve Bryant reported that the Wabana Township Supervisors requested a citizen committee study the

2003 Wabana Township Zoning Ordinance 101. The following recommendations were made at a public hearing: (1) that it was not in Wabana Township’s best interest to take on full enforcement of Itasca County’s Zoning Ordinance. (2) that Wabana Township only enforce the Wabana Township Ordinance 101. (3) a moratorium on double permit fees.

Discussion followed concerning examples of a boathouse and a standing chimney. Bud Sage stated these were being looked into. Steve Bryant reminded members that Wabana’s Ordinance 101 only pertains to P.U.D.’s (planned unit developments) and communication towers.

Itasca County Coalition of Lake Associations:

President David Lick reported on updates of ICOLA’s activities:

- 1) Citizen input for the update of the Itasca County Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The draft will go before the Itasca County Board of Commissioners. Residents from Deer Lake generated a citizen’s petition requesting the Itasca County Board of Commissioners to place a moratorium for one year on any new P.U.D. zoning requests until the ordinance is completed and in force. Discussion followed.
- 2) Applications are available for Shoreland Stewardship Awards, printed in the WCOLA Newsletter and web site. Last year Warren and Kay Chapman were recognized.
- 3) Information was made available about conservation easements.
- 4) The Emerald Ash Bore could potentially move into this area via firewood brought in from other regions. DNR Entomologist, Mike Albers had written information available about this deadly ash tree invasive pest.
- 5) A copy of The Minnesota Waters Newsletter, the state lake association was presented. WCOLA is a member; individuals were encouraged to consider membership.
- 6) Mesaba Excelsior Coal Fired Power Plant proposal information was updated. Currently two administrative law judges ruled no for the current permitting process. Legislators are trying to make an exception

for carbon dioxide for the the Mesaba and Bigstone County Power proposals.

- 7) ICOLA discount cards have been created by Aaron Alto for all lake association members in Itasca County to use at participating vendors.

Program Committee members Bill Bottoms, Susan Hawkinson and Bill Berg encouraged an idea exchange for future WCOLA programs. Suggestions were: to watch and discuss An Inconvenient Truth, avoiding frozen septic and water systems, DNR's Wildlife Specialist speaker, sponsor a clean water breakfast for area residents to educate on stewardship and encourage membership in WCOLA and invite the new local DNR's Game Warden to speak.

Improving Communications and the need to get the newsletter out earlier was suggested by President Chambers. Deadlines for newsletter information were printed in the May WCOLA Newsletter.

WCOLA's Annual Picnic will be held on July 21st. Various ideas were discussed: travel in boats to a lakeside picnic site, remain at the Wabana Township Hall to be more inclusive to all residents of the area and change picnic menu to an ice cream social.

Aerial photography maps by Jack Velzen were on display. Maps are available for sale. Jack donated a gift of a large aerial map of Wabana Township and is presently displayed at the township hall.

Open agenda:

Get the Lead Out of Tackle Boxes! Ken Zimmer encouraged everyone to exchange to non lead fishing tackle.

Next Meeting: June 16, 2007.

Meeting Adjourned. A motion was made to adjourn. Approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Lick

FROM DEBORAH GELBACH: TAXES

Over the shock of writing your property tax check yet?

Do you wonder why your seasonal property taxes seem to be skyrocketing upwards about 16 percent every year—while the services you receive seem to stagnate?

Do you wonder why the wild beauty of natural lake shorelines around us is disappearing fast—because it being sold to developers then turned into multi-home properties?

If you ask yourself either of those questions, you know that property taxes aren't just a legislative issue, they've become a very personal challenge and an important reason to attend the WCOLA meeting, probably in August, when we will have a program presented by a member of the MSRPO, Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners Coalition, to present ideas about how we can work together with other lake associations and MSRPO's 6000 members. .

By continually communicating with our legislators and representatives of the executive branch, we can ensure that policy-makers know how the state's property tax system discriminates against seasonal owners and those who own sensitive natural land. MSRPO's members believe that:
** Cabins should be taxed no differently than any other homestead property.
** Cabin owners should receive all refunds, buy-downs and discounts applied to Homestead property.
** All stakeholders, including seasonal property owners should entitled to vote in local elections.
** Minnesota's property tax code is irreparably broken and property tax reform is desperately needed.

This presentation is not going to be a dry discussion of Minnesota's tax code. Instead, it should be an opportunity for you to discover how you can help save our shorelines and our pocketbooks too.

For additional information about MSRPO, the work the organization has already done on our behalf—and the challenges they faced during this year's legislative session, check www.msrepo.org. And, if you're not already a member, why don't you join?

Who started the rumor that cabin owners are rich?

In their work with legislators and members of the executive branch during the last session, MSRPO continued to hear the following "why should we help lake shore owners? They're all wealthy and can afford the taxes."

Well, MSPO will be the first to tell you that all of us are NOT fabulously wealthy. Recent research revealed the following about cabin owners:

- Average age: 56 years
- Average years of property ownership: 25 years
- Average household income: \$50,500
- 37 percent are retired and living on fixed income
- On average, a cabin owner spends 64 days every year on the property.
- On average 6 adult family members use the property
- Cabin owners spend more than \$4,000 per family every year in the community where the cabin is located.

With appreciation to the MSRPO website,
www.msppo.org

The 2007 Legislature managed to pass a bill that would have given help to Seasonal owners, and would have aided in maintaining forests around lakes for water protection, but Governor Pawlenty vetoed the whole bill and has not called a special session to provide a bill he will sign. This is a matter grave concern to lakeshore owners of all kinds.

You should know that until this month, there was no one on the MSRPO Board of Directors from Itasca County's seasonal owners, but at its last meeting the Board approved appointment of WCOLA member George Colburn to the Board. – Ed.

THIS IS THE JUNE 2007 ISSUE OF THE WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION'S CHAIN LETTER.

The next meeting of the Association is Saturday June 15. I know nothing about the program. I take full responsibility for the late, short newsletter, and apologize to all who have been inconvenienced

**THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE
WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION
Jean Koewler, Treasurer
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Grand Rapids, MN 55744**

