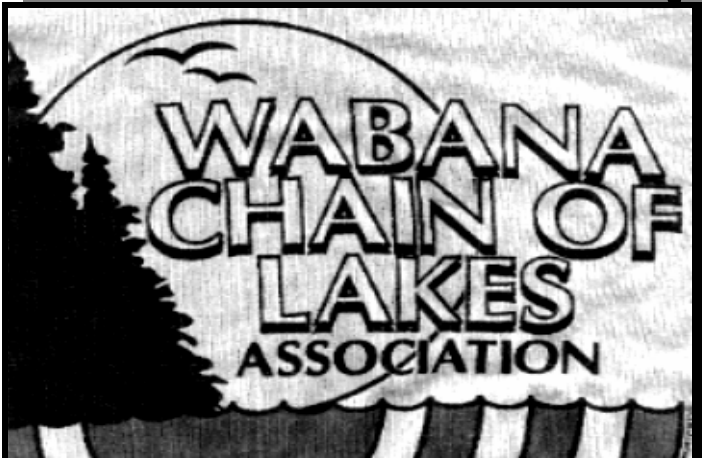


# The Chain Letter of the



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

# September 2007

Volume 11, Number 5

Editor: Bill Downing

**Please note my new email address:**

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**Next Newsletter deadline: October 15, 2007**

### Officers:

President: Dick Chambers 326-2809  
Vice President: Lloyd Adams 326-2130  
Treasurer: Jean Koewler 326-4302  
Secretary: Gail Olijnek 326-2431

### Advisory Committee.

Lloyd Adams 326-2130  
Steve Bryant 326-5473  
Nancy Ellsworth 326-8056  
David Lick 326-6837  
Roger Linder 326-2266  
Sherry Miner 326-0589  
Cathy Rudolph 327-0820  
John Zimmerman 326-1020

At the August meeting, there was sentiment that anyone who could do so should have their newsletters sent by email, to speed delivery and save printing and postage. To have your Chain Letter sent to you by email, please send your email address to Jean Koewler, [koewlerj@lcp2.net](mailto:koewlerj@lcp2.net)

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### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Just a quick note to say thank you to all who did volunteer work this past year. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Bud Sage and Susan Lick for all the years of dedication as officers of our great organization. They have both agreed to set on the advisory committee. So thank you all for another great year. Hope to see you all on the 15th of September. It will be the last meeting of the year.

Thanks, Dick

### WCOLA Minutes – August 18, 2007

Program – Rian Reed who is a Watershed Coordinator for the DNR spoke about the phosphorus sensitivity of the lakes in Itasca County. Rian explained the impact of phosphorus loading and how the DNR uses this information to manage shoreline and watershed use.

There was a moment of silence in honor of Joel Solomon who recently passed away. Joel was instrumental in getting the Unger property on Little Trout Lake designated as U.S. land.

Treasurer's report as of 8/07 gave us a balance of \$5,798.23 (plus a \$3,000.00 certificate at the State Bank). There are now 113 households on our books.

**Visit our web site [www.wcola.org](http://www.wcola.org)  
Add your items to it by sending to Mark Miner,  
[mminer@minergroup.com](mailto:mminer@minergroup.com)**

We gained two new members (one household) at the meeting. Bonnie and Roy Holmes of Grand Rapids are now proud members of WCOLA.

Email of the newsletter will be on the agenda for the next advisory board meeting. We would like to see more members receiving the newsletter by email to save us postage and printing.

The Minnesota Seasonal Property Owners Association was discussed. It was decided that people should join as individuals rather than WCOLA sending money. They believe that numbers speak, so joining individually would be much more effective. [*MSRPO.org to join.*]

A motion was made and carried that we designate even years (2008, 2010, etc.) for water quality testing. Testing is done at ice out, mid-summer, and freeze up and runs about \$2,000.

Roger Linder of the Historical Committee asked for money for supplies and a filing cabinet to contain the information that is now coming in from the questionnaire that was sent out with the last newsletter. A motion was made and approved to authorize up to \$250 for those supplies. Roger also is encouraging everyone to complete and send in their questionnaires.

Bud Sage gave a short Township report. The project of water at the cemetery is being completed. Other projects include rebuilding the sign at the Town Hall, cutting weeds along the roads, road repairs, dust control, tennis court repairs and monitoring the permit requests.

Dave Lick, ICOLA President, gave us a complete report of the Ordinance/Comprehensive Land use plan. He also spent some time talking about Alternative Shoreline Standards and Conservation Development. He advised people to contact Don Dewey at 218-327-2857 to add their input to these issues.

Dave told us about his exciting new project, the Itasca Water Legacy. They now have 20 people in the consortium working in conjunction with the Blandin Foundation on data, awareness, and policy regarding the water resources in Itasca County.

Election of Officers was held at this meeting. Jean Koewler will continue as the Treasurer. Gail Olijnek will be the new Secretary. Her number is 326-2431. And, Lloyd Adams will be the new Vice President. Lloyd's number is 326-2130.

A date for fall road clean up will be set soon. A motion was made and seconded that we donate the leftover food from the picnic to the Food Shelf.

Mention was made that the Picnic Committee consider having the event on a week night next year.

A reminder – we encourage residents from other lakes in the area (Pickerel, Hanson, Clearwater, etc.) to join WCOLA. We need the input and would enjoy meeting other residents.

Bill Downing is asking for information for the newsletter. Anyone with interesting stories, member bios and/or other useful information can email Bill at [wdowningster@gmail.com](mailto:wdowningster@gmail.com).

Deadline for the next newsletter will be September 9 and our next meeting is scheduled for September 15, .

Sherry Miner, Secretary pro tem

## **FROM THE STAR TRIBUNE**

*The Steering Committee has asked that the following article from the StarTribune for July 15, be reprinted in our Chain Letter.*

**Lake lovers have an Important agenda that, if actively pursued, would benefit the entire state. But fighting for sustainability is a do-it-yourself project. Don't stand by while Minnesota's water goes down the drain.**

### ABOUT THIS SERIES

"With Water in Mind" is a long-term project by the StarTribune's editorial page staff and online staff. The goal of the series is to examine issues surrounding water: efforts to protect it, pressures to exploit it, dangers that threaten it, its role in Minnesota culture and its meaning in our lives. To see the entire series, visit [StarTribune.com/water](http://StarTribune.com/water)

**BY JIM SCHWARTZ, Hackensack, Minnesota.**

Jim Schwartz is a retired journalism professor.

*Dr. Schwartz has given me permission by telephone to reprint this article in the Chain Letter.*

The Star Tribune is to be commended for opening a dialogue on the status of what is arguably Minnesota's most precious resource: its water. Anything that will promote awareness is helpful. But time is running out. What's needed now is action—statewide.

In 1994, Gov. Arne Carlson introduced Minnesotans to the eminently sensible concept of sustainability. Since then, however, neither governors nor legislators have demonstrated the vision or the courage to develop the truly innovative, long-range policies and programs needed to protect and preserve some of the critical targets of sustainability: lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands.

My particular interest happens to be lakes. For more than 80 years I have fished and boated Minnesota lakes, from the southern border to the northern lakes region. Those experiences and the testimony of other observers have convinced me that, to a greater or lesser extent, almost all lakes are suffering from a variety of ailments: property development that is either inappropriate or excessive, septic and other waste contamination, airborne and non-point-source pollution, fishing and boating pressure, wind and water erosion, agricultural runoff, industrial and municipal discharges, invasions of exotic species, habitat destruction, careless shoreland management practices and more.

Each alone is a clear threat to long-term resource health. Combine them and they spell serious and continued damage to the jewels in Minnesota's crown—the thousands of lakes that annually draw hordes of visitors to the state, entice natives to vacation at home (and, increasingly, to retire there), thereby providing a boost to the state's economy. All of that bounty will fade if the lake country is allowed to slide into decline.

Can anything be done? Yes. Thanks to initiatives by individuals, lake associations and other local groups, and to the leadership and support provided by Minnesota Waters, whose goal is to preserve and enhance water resources, a few hundred lakes are benefitting from protection programs. But on far too many, nothing of the sort is happening.

Wherever that's the case, lake dwellers must pick up what is essentially a loose ball and run with

it—that is, launch a sustainability campaign of their own, lake by lake. It won't be easy and it will cost money, but with diligence it can become a reality.

My model is Ten Mile Lake in Cass County, where I have spent most of each summer for 46 years. What began there as a modest preservation effort about 30 years ago has evolved into a full-blown program with enthusiastic support from most residents. More to the point, its effects so far are positive: Water clarity has improved and nutrient levels have declined, quality indices are better than when we began our effort.

Lakes age over time. The immediate challenge is to slow that process, reduce the effect of man's footprint, and even, where possible, reverse negative trends. Positive results don't happen overnight, so those who want to adopt this approach should be prepared for a long-term campaign whose aim is steady, measurable progress.

*Now Mr. Schwartz gets specific, telling his audience how and why to form a Lake Association. We at WCOLA are ahead of him, having formed in 1990, and have seventeen years of experience. Nevertheless, there are things that he suggests that we have not done, or completed. You'll find my teacher's assessment of our standing in italics below. —Ed.*

**For those who are uncertain about how to get started, here is a road map:**

**1. Organize.** If your lake doesn't have an association, form one. (Help is available from at [www.minnesotawaters.org](http://www.minnesotawaters.org)) It's wise to organize as a nonprofit association.

*A-. We are a lake association of long-standing, and at one time had non-profit status, but I don't believe we have regained it lately. If not, we should.*

**2. Sell the idea.** Convince association officers, directors and the membership that sustainability is a worthy goal. It could spell the difference between whether your lake continues to deteriorate or benefits from a dedicated preservation/ conservation ethic.

*B+. I think there is no doubt that the members who attend meetings are sold, even if we do not use the word "sustainability" as such. We have quite a lot of dues-payers who don't, or can't, attend meetings and do very little otherwise.*

**3. Prepare a long-range management plan.** Set attainable goals for your lake and its watershed, measure progress, and review and revise the plan as needed.

*A, so far. We have a very pretty management plan, which needs specifics added, and that means review and revise.*

**4. Study your lake.** If you are not already doing so, conduct Secchi disk (clarity) readings weekly at designated sites from May to September. Generally speaking, the clearer the lake, the better its relative health. (A Secchi disk maybe obtained free from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, along with instructions about how to use it.)

*A+! We have years of Secchi disk readings from many parts of our Chain, thanks to a lot of dependable people.*

**5. Do chemical analyses.** Arrange for chemical testing of the lake's water at least three times annually during the summer season to determine baseline enrichment levels and to begin plotting trends. Top-to-bottom temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles are important as well. (You will need professional help and advice from a state-certified laboratory; plus funding, to plan and carry out these studies.)

*A. We take samples from ten sites every three (now two) years, analyze by certified labs, and we fund this ourselves. Those who have read the Chain Letter can see the analyses themselves, or go to our web site, WCOLA.org and look at the winter editions.*

**6. Identify sources.** Whether it is upstream contamination, outmoded septic systems, excessive erosion or other problems, pin-point them and seek correction, mitigation or elimination.

*A. Our Association and Wabana Township led the parade in Itasca County for septic system inspection and up-dating. This was an amazing feat for a township and lake association to carry out, and took great effort by many people. Congratulations!*

**7. Start a newsletter.** Inform residents about association activities, educate them about what it means to be a responsible lake steward, keep them up to date on developments in lake property management and encourage their support.

*I'll leave this grade to you, and only say in my own defense that I've asked to have as much input from the members as possible. I think improvement is always achievable.*

**8. Sponsor demonstrations.** Good candidates: seminars on best shoreland management practices, lakeshore landscaping, waste treatment system updates and maintenance, and wildlife and fishery habitat restoration. Wherever you can, call on the expertise of state agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources and the Pollution Control Agency.

*C. We really haven't had many demonstrations as such, but we have had a lot of wonderful programs on how to do these things. One shoreland restoration on Wakeman Bay is all the demonstration I know of.*

**9. Get involved.** Seek appointment to the county's zoning and planning boards, where most of the crucial decisions are made. At the very least, attend township and zoning adjustment board meetings.

*C. I will say that things are looking up, with one of our members a County Commissioner, and one a President of ICOLA, and one a Township Supervisor, and now some members are working with zoning and planning—but we are on the whole pretty complacent. Perhaps we need year-round steering from the Advisory Committee, or more frequent newsletters, or an email network, or....?*

**10. Look for allies.** Help organize or join existing county coalitions of lake associations for idea exchanges and to present a united front to county commissioners.

*C. Here I am assessing not just WCOLA, but lake lovers over the county. A dependable few attend ICOLA meetings, but there should be flocks, not little gatherings. WCOLA members do better than most Associations, but it's nearly pitiful overall. Lakes are our most important economic resource, and south of us lie hundreds of despoiled and overbuilt lakes for us to use as examples of what not to do.*

**11. Know your legislators.** Work with them in proposing measures designed to protect and preserve the state's water resources. Oppose legislation that threatens harm to the environment.

*Do you know your Senator and House member? Do you talk with them about preserving and enhancing our resource?*

**12. Raise money.** Increase membership, boost dues, find an "angel", sponsor fundraisers, sell T-shirts. Whatever works, do it.

*C. We sell coffee cups, T-shirts, denim shirts, but not as fund raisers. We have never raised our dues, since 1990. We don't seem to need more money, so this is moot, but I still worry about not having a "war chest", in case we need to hire a lawyer or other professional.*

## **A PAIR OF NEW MEMBERS**

From Sherry Miner. The newest members of WCOLA are Roy and Bonnie Holmes of Grand Rapids, MN.

Roy works in Public Safety in Grand Rapids and Bonnie just recently went back to school and earned her Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education. She is also Secretary of the Board of the Grand Rapids Players.

Bonnie and Roy have been spending their summers at Wa-Ga-Tha-Ka renting a cabin for the season for the past four years. They love the fact that they can have all the benefits of their own cabin without the responsibilities of maintenance and repairs. It turns out to be a real benefit for Wa-Ga-Tha-Ka, too. Resorts don't always have such responsible, caring people that stay for the entire season. It works out to be a win-win situation.

The Holmes decided to spend their time at Wabana Lake because of the quality of the lake and the area. They joined WCOLA because they would like to help keep up that quality that brought them here. Preservation of such a wonderful spot is important for the generations to come. "Spending time at Wabana Lake gives one a deeper appreciation of wonders of nature. You don't always have to travel hundreds of miles to find the peace and quiet of the woods and the lakes."



## **BACK TO TROUT LAKE AFTER 68 YEARS**

From Bill Berg

In mid-August, Pete and Bobbi Ireton (they have the place on the hill at the north end of Trout Lake) told me that there was a lady staying at the resort who had last been there 68 years ago. I just had to meet her, and I did. Eileen Jones had last been here in 1939 or 1940, when the Martin family still owned what is now Mayen's Northvue Resort on Trout Lake. And better yet, Eileen had been there each year for 13 years before that, as a young girl. She remembered so much, and had a chance to visit with several Trout Lake residents. She remarked that she had wanted to return to Trout Lake for 67 years! Her connections to the lake are notable. Her Grandfather, Samuel Elwell Waters, built the summer home owned by Karl and Pat Fischer, in the northeast corner of Trout Lake. She played with the Martin children, and even spent a couple days in school with one Martin daughter. She remembers boat trips in the Martin's wood boats with her Dad, and a special one through Little Trout, Wabana, and into Bluewater, where they had a picnic.

One day, I took Eileen (center in photo), her daughter (right), and sister Nan Davis (left), all of Cincinnati, on a boat trip into Wabana. She remembered the creek well, and remarked that the water was higher back then. I dropped the threesome off at the Joyce Estate, where they spent a couple hours. They also visited the Itasca County Historical Society, and explored the area around the resort. It was a treat for me to talk Trout Lake History with such a distinguished lady!

## 2007 PAID MEMBERSHIP

*Here is the annual list of paid members members of WCOLA as of September. If your name is*

*not in its alphabetical position, then either a mistake has been made or you forgot to mail that \$20 check to Jean Koewler. There is still time! Letters show your lake of major interest—Bluewater, Clearwater, Doan, Island Lake, Little Trout, Little Wabana, Pickerei, Wabana.. All those listed have paid dues through 2007, unless otherwise noted.*

Adams, John and Cheryl, LW  
Adams, Lloyd and Vicki, W  
Adams, Pat, B  
Bende, Craig and Cindy, W  
Berg, Wm and Helene , T  
Birkemeyer, Joan, W  
Boblit, Terry R. and Lynn M., W  
Booth, William and Jeannette, B  
Bottoms, Mary Frances and Bill, Jr., B  
Boyle, Reginald and Susan. L T  
Brasch, Rich and Carole Schmidt, W  
2008  
Bryant, Steven and Lynette, B  
Bunge, Chris and Nancy, W  
Burke, Dan and Jeanne, W  
Burkholder, Gary and Carol, W  
Chambers, Richard and Patricia, W  
Conover, Mark and Ellen, W  
Costello, Kevin and Donna, B  
Craig, Stanley and Mary Lee, W  
Davis, Dennis and Janice, W  
Dettmer, Edward and Helen , P  
Doty, Fred and Kathy, W 2008  
Downing, John and Marcia, W  
Downing, William, W  
Edwards, James and Virginia, W  
Ellsworth, Nancy, B  
Fischer, Karl and Pat , T  
Fligge, Dan and Diane, B  
Fordham, Greg and Ruth, W  
Friedlieb, Dr. Peter and Chris, W  
2008  
Fuller, Gordon and Lynette, W  
Gelbach, Phil and Deborah, W  
Gephart, Mary and Bob, W  
Gettinger, John and Martha Ann, W  
Gowling, Jim and Marcia, W

Gray, John and Sharon, B  
Gross, Richard and Carol  
Harding, Vicky and Rick , T  
Hartung, Jack and Donna, W  
Hawkinson, Susan , D  
Hemmingson, Bev, W  
Holmes, Bonnie and Roy  
Houwman, Ronald and Beatrice, W  
Human, Chuck and Becky, W  
Ireton, Louis and Barbara, T  
Johnson, Dave, W  
Kastner, Rex and Melanie, T  
Kaukis, Erik and Andrew, B  
Klacan, George and Mary Lou, B  
Klinger, Richard and Dorothy, W  
Koewler, Dennis and Jean, W  
Kruger, Ken and Deb, W  
Skelton. Doug and Dara Wolf La-  
Force-Skelton , T  
Langenbrunner, William and Pat, W  
Larson, Jerald E. and Emma J., W  
Lick, Dave and Sue, W  
Linder, Roger and Nancy, W  
Linder. William H. and Kathryn J., B  
Loney Family  
Lukens, John and Karen, W 2012  
Maijala, Jim and Pat, B  
Manning, Robert, B  
Massaro, Richard and Nancy , IL  
McCullough, James and Jane, W  
McCullough, Mark and Kathy, W  
Mead, Steven and Pat, B  
Miller, Johanna Bunge, W  
Miltich, Matthew and Loree , C  
Miner, Mark, W  
Miner, Sherry, W & LW  
Moore-Carroll, John and Irma, W  
Morris, Margaret Z. and Arthur L.  
Merrill, W 2008  
Myers, W. H. Myrick, Dorothy, W  
Myrick, Tom and Carol, W  
Nelson, Dr. Richard and Kathleen, W  
Cutler, Susan A. and Terry Novak, W  
Oberge, Paul and Barb, W  
Oja, Gary and Kim, W  
Olijnek, Jim and Gail, W  
Owen, Kay, W  
Past, Greg and Arlene Wheaton, W  
Popovich, Stan and Jean

Ries, James and Susan, B  
Rowe, Christel, LW 2008  
Rudolph, Catherine, W  
Rutherford, Bill and Diane, B  
Boss, Brenda and David Sage, B  
Sage, L. W. "Bud" and Mary Lou, B  
Sage, Randall and Nancy, B  
Sage, Stuart W. and Tanya, B  
Schroeder, Clifford , IL  
Schwartz, William and Sally  
Shaffer, Alvina, L W  
Sigfrinius, David and Beverly, W  
Sights, Sylvia, W  
Smith, Bruce and Diane  
Snuggerud, David, Dale, and Eliza-  
beth, W  
Stein, Scott and Jan, W  
Stevens, Joe and Martha, B  
Strege, Philip and Karen  
Tack, Jeff and Debbie, B  
Thompson, Kurt and Lavonne, B  
2008  
Unger, Harold and Betty , T  
Velzen, Jack and Sally, W  
Voneida, Ted and Swanny, B  
Wassberg Whittenbury, Pamela, LT  
Widmark, Merrill and Marlene, W  
Wilbur, Sally and George, W 2008  
Wilkus, Michael and Barbara, B  
Willson, Gib and Kathleen, W  
Willson, Gig and Kristen, W  
Wooden, David and Karen, B  
Zimmer, Ken Jr. and Barbara, W  
Zimmerman, James and Marie , T  
Zimmerman, John and Charlotte , T  
Zimmerman, John Jr. and Alida, T

*If information is wrong, or things are missing, or you have paid and are not in your place, or you would like some other listing, please let Jean Koewler know as soon as possible. Neither she nor I is perfect, but we would like to be correct. If you forgot to pay, please do it right away!*

## FALL ROADSIDE CLEANUP TIME—From George Klacan.

**Come join others from WCOLA at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 19** to pick up unsightly trash

along roads in our township. This rewarding activity typically takes less than two hours of your time, it beautifies our little chunk of heaven and should

give you a warm, fuzzy feeling regardless of the weather conditions. Itasca County provides plastic bags and safety vests. Coffee and goodies will be there too. A drizzle won't stop us. In the event of a downpour, we'll tackle the job at the same time on the next day.

### MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

*From the newsletter of the Minnesota Lakes Association, before it merged to become "Minnesota Waters". Jim Schwartz (page 3) tells how to work together in Association; I thought you might like to be reminded of what you can do as a household to keep our beautiful lakes. A lot of us have done a lot already, but a reminder always helps.*

#### Best Management Practices For Lake Protection and Enjoyment

1. **Septic systems** should be in code with local ordinances and properly operated and maintained.
  - \*Do not put household cleaners, paint, solvents and pesticides down the drain. Practice water conservation in the home.
  - \*Limit the use of antibacterial products.
  - \*Pump septic systems at least every three years, more often depending on use. Systems with garbage disposals should be pumped annually.
2. **Practice good lawn maintenance.**
  - \*Limit fertilizing. Use zero-phosphorus fertilizer unless a soil test indicates the need for phosphorus.
  - \*Do not fertilizer within 50 feet of the lake.
  - \*Keep grass clipping, leaves and pet waste out of the lake.
  - \*Reduce or eliminate pesticide use on the lawn and garden.

3. **Maintain or establish a shoreland buffer zone** of natural vegetation.
  - \*Buffers prevent erosion and infiltration of nutrients into the lake.
  - \*Buffers should be a minimum of 30 feet. Encourage woody vegetation and tall grasses to stabilize the shoreland.
  - \*Minimize the disturbance of aquatic plants as they help to stabilize shorelines, and they are critical as habitat for fish and other wild life.
  - \*Slow shoreland runoff with gentle sloping and terraced landscaping.
4. **Be a safe boater.** Follow local boating regulations and safety rules and respect the rights of others.
5. **Practice catch-and-release fishing.**
  - \*Prevent the spread of exotics, such as eurasian watermilfoil and zebra mussels.
  - \*Checking your boat before and after launching in the water; encourage others at the public access to do the same.
  - \*Lake associations can organize monitoring teams to check for milfoil during the summer or organize access monitoring programs. (For assistance, call the DNR Eurasian Watermilfoil Program at 651-297-8021).
  - \*Participate in the Zebra Mussel Watch Program. Call the DNR at 651-296-2835 or Minnesota Sea Grant at 218-726-8106.
6. **Work with local officials**
  - \*Be part of the local water planning process; ensure that the county water plan contains protective and rehabilitative management efforts for lakes in your county.
  - \*Attend planning and zoning meetings or boards of adjustment to voice concern about development activity that does not meet local ordinances.

\*Get to know your county commissioners, share your concerns with them.

**7. Become part of the local decision making process.**

\*Support your local lake association and county coalition of lake associations (if organized).

\*Become part of the decision-making process for local land use ordinances—serve on the township board, soil and water conservation district board, water planning board, or other local government committees and appointed commissions.

**8. Make your concerns known** to state and federal legislators.

**9. Support Minnesota Waters.**

17021 Commercial Park Dr, Suite #4, Brainerd, MN 56401

800-515-5253, 218-824-5565

Fax: 218-615-1771 [info@minnesotawaters.org](mailto:info@minnesotawaters.org)

**PROGRAM FOR NEXT MEETING**

The program for the last WCOLA meeting of the year, on **Saturday, September 15**, is a special one. Pam Perry, DNR Nongame Wildlife Specialist in Brainerd, will speak on loons, including nesting, chick rearing, migration, calls, behavior, and population levels. She will also discuss DNR's two loon surveys -- the Volunteer Loon Watcher's Survey, and the Minnesota Loon Monitoring Program. There will be loon posters, and other loon information available for all. I have also asked Pam to talk about the progress of the trumpeter swan reintroduction program.

Many of us also know Pam Perry from her monthly radio program on KAXE. Children are invited, and please bring a friend.

**Treats at 8:30, Program at 9:00, Business Meeting at 10:00, September 15, 2007.**

THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE  
WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION  
Jean Koewler, Treasurer  
32040 Wakeman Bay Trail  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744



