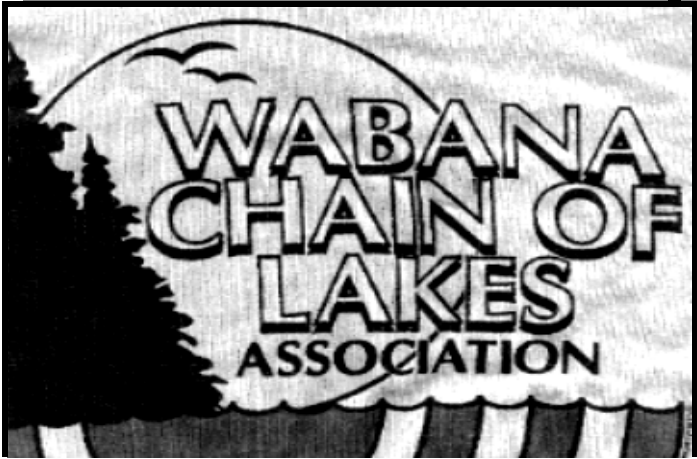


# The Chain Letter of the



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

## June 2008

# What is so rare?

Volume 12, Number 2

Editor: Bill Downing

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**Next Newsletter deadline: July 1, 2008**

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President: Dick Chambers 326-2809

Vice President: Lloyd Adams 326-2130

Treasurer: Jean Koewler 326-4302

Secretary: Gail Olijnek 326-2431

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Nancy Ellsworth 326-8056

David Lick 326-6837

Roger Linder 326-2266

Sherry Miner 326-0589

Cathy Rudolph 327-0820

John Zimmerman 326-1020

**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)**

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#### MINUTES

of the meeting of May 17, 2008

**Welcome and opening** of the 2008 year.

**Open Jam Session.** President Chambers and the WCOLA Advisory Committee suggested in place of a program, the floor be opened for any issues or thoughts about the Wabana Chain of Lakes area. Topics raised for discussion included: the next program for the June WCOLA meeting; courtesy on the lakes; growth of the Bluewater Covenant Bible Camp, and the Highway 38 Scenic Byway.

**Business meeting.** President Dick Chambers called the meeting to order with 24 in attendance.

**Minutes** of the September 2007 were approved.

**Treasurer's report** read by Dennis Koewler for Treasurer Jean Koewler. Approved.

**Balance as of September 14, 2007 \$ 5,634.07**

#### Receipts

Dues 1,600.00

Contributions 165.00

Lake Maps 30.00

Total receipts \$ 1,795.00

#### Disbursements:

Roger Linder, 3 drawer file 100.00

WCOLA historical committee

Postmaster, 260 stamps 106.60

Total disbursements 206.60

**Checkbook Balance, May 10, 2009 \$7,222.47**

**CD – Renewal date July 22, 2008 \$3,117.01**

Total paid households, 74

**WCOLA Advisory Committee.** Member Cathy Rudolph stepped down from the Committee, but will remain a WCOLA member and a summer

resident of Wabana Lake. She served for many years as Association Treasurer. A vote of sincere thanks was given to Cathy for her many years of work.

**Maps** of the Wabana Chain of Lakes were on display for purchase from Jack Velzen. New methods of production have been added to the maps. They will continue to be available at meetings, or by contacting Jack.

**Wabana Township road cleanup.** George and May Klacan, Ken and Barb Zimmer, co chairs, invite folks to meet May 20<sup>th</sup> at 9 am, at the Wabana Town Hall. Supplies are provided by Itasca County. A photo of the crew, sent to the Grand Rapids Herald Review for public relations for WCOLA was suggested.

**Agenda, June meeting** will include discussion of the July meeting and picnic. President Chambers stated that we also need an election committee for August elections.

**Take The Lead Out** was presented by Ken Zimmer. A campaign to get lead out of fishing tackle was coordinated by Ken with information, posters, and non-lead tackle available from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

**Water clarity reports** were sent out to all Secchi Disk readers in the State of Minnesota. Sherry Miner brought examples of the new informative reports sent from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Nancy Ellsworth, organizer of the WCOLA Secchi Disk readers, reported that volunteers have been recording weekly from April/May into October. WCOLA volunteers include: Cheryl Adams, Bill Berg, Nancy Ellsworth, George Klacan, Dennis Koewler, Susan Lick, Sherry Miner, Paul Oberg, Ken Zimmer and John Zimmerman. Reports for our chain of lakes are published in every winter issue of the *Chain Letter* and all Minnesota results are available at [www.pca.state.mn.us/water/clmp.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/clmp.html)

**Itasca County Coalition of Lake Associations** president David Lick reported a full year of public policy and zoning ordinance issues. This year our County Commissioner representative is up for election.

The Pokegama Lake Association reported an invasive plant, Curly Leaf Pond Weed, growing in Pokegama Lake. The Department of Natural Resources hired a number of public access boat launch monitors to help encourage boat owners to inspect their crafts and trailers.

David suggested a summer picnic for all Wabana Township residents to be sponsored with the Township Board.

Sherry Miner suggested public relations concerning Secchi Disk readers, lake restorations and rain gardens in Itasca County be promoted.

ICOLA meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7 pm at the Itasca County Courthouse and are open to the public.

**Ideas for WCOLA's 2008 goals** are being sought by the WCOLA Advisory Council. Discussion and suggestions included the public access and invasive plant issues.

**Wabana Township Board Member Bud Sage** gave his regular report to WCOLA.

The Itasca County Historical Society received some 30,000 photo negatives of great historical value from the Grand Rapids *Herald Review*; they are available for the public to view.

Township roads were discussed with plans for some resurfacing and dust control. The township tennis courts will also be resurfaced. Plans to rebuild the ice rink warming facility are being discussed. New Custodians have been hired for township facilities.

The Itasca County Tax Assessor will be assessing Wabana Township.

**The Betsy Downing Scholarship** project was updated by George Klacan. Jessica Colburn, a University of Minnesota limnology student, has been hired to complete the study. Jessica's primary focus will be on the invertebrates of the WCOLA system.

**2008 WCOLA Meeting dates:** President Dick Chambers reported that the Advisory Committee set dates for the upcoming regular meetings: May 17<sup>th</sup>, June 21<sup>st</sup>, July 19<sup>th</sup>, August 16<sup>th</sup>, and September 20<sup>th</sup>

**President Chambers** requested a motion to adjourn. Made and approved.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Lick, member and Secretary pro tem.

## EDITORIAL ON MEETING DATES

*from Bill Downing, editor.*

I was unable to attend the May WCOLA meeting due to a long-scheduled cataract operation, and will be missing the June meeting because my eldest granddaughter will be married that weekend. I hope I will not miss the July Picnic, but the first business meeting I can attend will be in August, which is also our Annual Meeting with election of officers.

This is a situation with many, maybe most, of our non-resident members. May is usually the busiest month of the social year, with graduations and other pre-summer activities, and most people first get to their cabins on Memorial Day; then June is wildly busy, and people get to the cabin over the Fourth of July, often for a long weekend.

Twenty-four people attended the May 2008 business meeting, apparently predominantly year-round residents (judging from who talked). I sincerely believe that a meeting on Memorial Day weekend, advertised ahead, to be *short*, would have brought quite a lot more non-residents who are concerned with the *business* of the association.

Again, we will not see many non-resident cabin owners at the June 21<sup>st</sup> business meeting, since they have jobs and responsibilities in a month that is fraught with home activities. But I believe quite a large number would be at a meeting nearer the Fourth, when they are likely to be at the cabin anyway. And we need the presence and interest of those people.

It would be a mistake to let this organization drift into a get-together of a few dozen families who reside on the lakes, but we seem to be heading that direction. To be strong, we need everybody. We need non-resident presence at meetings, their membership on association committees, their ideas. We need to know and recognize each other.

I was too late with my suggestion on meeting dates for this year, but I urgently hope that future officers and Advisory Committees will pay strong attention

to likely dates for meetings next year, when non-resident members can be present. I'd like to hear by email from non-resident members who would be likely to attend more meetings if they were held when they could be at their cabins.

## FROM BILL BERG ON 2008 PROGRAMS

Susan Hawkinson and I have arranged the 2008 WCOLA programs. Feel free to put them in the WCOLA newsletter, so folks can plan ahead.

June 21. Itasca County Commissioner Catherine McLynn, who will speak on recent Itasca County developments on zoning, Forest Legacy, and lakeshore development.

July 19. Picnic, no program

August 16. John Zapata, retired US Forest Service Researcher and co-founder of Goods in the Woods, who will speak on birch bark crafts and his recent award-winning book on birch bark.

September 20. Kelley Barrett, US Forest Service Biologist from Deer River District of Chippewa National Forest (ours) who will speak on recent wildlife research and developments, like radio telemetry on the tiny ovenbird, and trumpeter swans.

## SHORELAND STEWARDSHIP AWARDS

*This is from I-COLA.*

The Shoreland Stewardship Award was established by the Itasca County Coalition of Lake Associations (I-COLA) in 2005, and annually recognizes Itasca County Shoreland property owners who are practicing good natural resource conservation practices on our counties lakes, rivers and streams. I-COLA funds the program, and it is administered by a committee comprised of I-COLA members and Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District staff (SWCD).

The purpose of the program is not only to recognize shoreland owners for their natural resources conservation efforts, but to promote the importance of maintaining the good water quality Itasca County is blessed with, and is so important to our way of life and economy.

Project examples include buffers of native vegetation between the mowed lawn and waters' edge, measures taken to prevent bank loss and sedimentation due to wave/wake action erosion, stormwater runoff management to limit rainwater discharge directly to a lake/river/stream (such as rain-gardens), and re-establishing or maintaining aquatic vegetation for wildlife habitat and/or lessening wave/wake action erosion.

Top award recipients will receive framed nature prints, while other finalists will receive certificates of recognition. Finalist projects, and the concept of shoreland stewardship, will be showcased at the county fair, in news releases to local papers, in a presentation to the county board of commissioners, and therefore, on the local television station.

If you value the good water quality and fish and wildlife habitat Itasca County Lakes provide, please help promote the concept of good shoreland stewardship. This can be done by nominating yourself or someone you know, who is practicing conservation on our shorelines. Applications for the 2008 award will be taken until October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, and can be obtained from the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District office (SWCD). Forms are available online, at [www.itascaswcd.org](http://www.itascaswcd.org), or by calling or stopping in - ask for Andy: 1889 E Hwy 2-Grand Rapids (just west of Sandstroms Distribution, on the north side of highway 2) or 218-326-0017.

*Here is the meat of the nomination form you will need to fill out. Get a copy on line, as described just above.*

## **Itasca County Coalition of Lake Associations (I-COLA)**

### **Shoreland Stewardship Award Application**

**Application for the Year:** 2008

**Submission Deadline:** October 1, 2008

**Name(s) of Applicant(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address of Project Area:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address (if different than above):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominees Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Lake or River:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of time project has been established:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description:** Describe the project, including things such as the type of plants, materials, quantities, and project square footage. Describe any maintenance that has been performed, and if available, include photos. Use additional sheets if needed.

**Professional Assistance Category** – Was the project designed and/or installed by a private consultant or contractor? \_\_\_\_\_

**Public Assistance Category** – Did you receive technical and/or financial assistance from a public agency?  
Yes\_ No\_

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**Is there anything else you would like us to know about the project?**

Contact the Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to learn about existing shoreland stewardship technical and cost share assistance programs.

Please return the completed form by **October 1, 2008** to:

Shoreland Steward Award Committee, Attn: Andy Itasca County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

1889 E. Hwy 2, Grand Rapids, MN. 55744

218-326-0017

[andy.aren@mn.nacdnet.net](mailto:andy.aren@mn.nacdnet.net)

*Finalists will be contacted for an on-site review*

## SHORELAND STEWARDSHIP AWARD

2008 Nomination / Application Form

### Shoreland Stewardship Award

This award recognizes and promotes outstanding natural resource conservation projects on Itasca County shoreland properties. The benefits of shoreland stewardship include the improvement of water quality, erosion control, shoreland stabilization, the maintenance of habitat for wildlife, fish and birds (but not geese), and the enhancement of the natural beauty of our shorelands for all.

#### Project Nomination Examples:

- Shoreland re-vegetation plantings, where a native vegetation buffer is re-established between the waters edge and mowed lawn.
- Re-establishing aquatic vegetation within the lake.
- Shoreline stabilization protection from ice, wind and waves.
- **Stormwater runoff management which reduces direct rainwater discharge to the lake/river/stream (such as rain gardens).**
- Participation in a SWCD, DNR, or **Extension** workshop or sponsored program.

#### **Help promote shoreland stewardship by nominating yourself or someone you know:**

Awards will be announced in the fall, with a formal presentation before the Itasca Co Board of Commissioners in the spring. Recognized projects will also be showcased at the County fair the following August, and news releases will be sent to area newspapers.

#### **SATURDAY'S MEETING:**

The WCOLA meeting starts with 8:30 am coffee and visiting (optional) then at 9:00 am a program, about 45 minutes. This month Itasca County Commissioner, Catherine McLynn will be updating folks on current happenings in Itasca County. Following the program the regular meeting starts and we are usually done by 11:15 to 11:30am. It

will be nice to meet you. I will forward this message to our WCOLA President, Dick Chambers as well.

### **NR FORMING COMMITTEES.**

*I borrowed this from the DNR Shoreland Rules Update web site, in the hopes that some of our readers will feel they have the time and ability to apply. Since it is "geographically" focused, it means that the people on the northern tier committee will be from this region, and should know the lakes and shores intimately. See the web site for more:*

[http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt\\_section/shoreland/shoreland\\_rules\\_update\\_project.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/shoreland/shoreland_rules_update_project.html)

Three (3) Geographically Focused Advisory (GFA) committees will be convened in August of 2008 to assist the DNR in the rule update project. Participation on a GFA will be determined by the DNR through a nomination process. Individuals interested in being on a GFA will need to complete the information below and submit it to Peder Otterson (DNR Shoreland Management Supervisor) by July 1, 2008. Not all individuals that submit a nomination will be selected to participate on a committee. Each of the three committees will be limited to 25 people, and the selection process will be based on achieving balanced representation from various interests as well as technical and lay representation.

The GFA will augment the statewide committees by allowing a greater number of individuals with greater local knowledge to engage in the rule revision process, so that draft rules will complement the diversity of Minnesota's shorelands.

The two main tasks of the GFA are:

1. Review issue identification report and develop policy and option recommendations for the DNR to consider when preparing draft rule revisions. This task will require at least 5 meetings between August 2008 and

December 2008.

2. Review and comment on preliminary rule revisions during the spring of 2009.

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Erika RL Rivers

NE Regional Lakes Planner  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Phone: 218-999-7914; Cell: 218-244-4349  
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## MINNESOTA WATERS MEETING

*Minnesota Waters, the result of the merger of two large water-oriented organizations, is having a Regional Summit meeting on Thursday June 26, 2008, in Walker at the Walker Area Community Center from 9 am to 5 pm . I don't know very much about this, but I know Minnesota Waters is an organization that is very important to us. Molly Zim, its director, hopes to have at least two representatives from each Lake Association in this region at the meeting.*

*I suggest that at the meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup> we vote to pay transportation for two or more members of WCOLA to represent us at the Walker meeting. I do not have an invitation form, but I feel sure the officers or Advisory Committee can obtain whatever invitations are needed from Molly.*

*Minnesota Waters also is asking Lake Association members to fill out a survey to "guide the development of presentation materials as well as ongoing support resources. The survey can be found at*

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zAvBptvjQkkPBsVcWGgIrA\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=zAvBptvjQkkPBsVcWGgIrA_3d_3d)

*It seems as though those addresses are becoming longer and longer, more and more complicated. This is worth the trouble, though.*

## HISTORY, FROM BILL BERG

*The WCOLA Historical Committee has decided to print a historical article in each newsletter. This is the first of several provided by Bill Berg. I hope you like it as much as I do!*

## A HISTORY OF THE TROUT LAKE AREA AND THE JOYCE ESTATE

*Editor's note: this is the first of several parts of an old manuscript on the Trout Lake area. The author is unknown, but if you know who wrote it, please let WCOLA know. It is transcribed just as it was written.*

For thousands of years this region has been inhabited by man. For most of this period no written records were kept; all that is known of man's use has been through what he left behind at his campsites along these lakes and streams. The historic period has been documented in a fragmentary manner. This paper is an attempt to bring all the known events into one document. Where possible, information was verified through legal documentation.

When the last glacial period ended 12,000 to 12,000 years ago, it left behind a rugged marginal moraine area filled with water to become Trout, Wabana, and Bluewater Lakes. Because of this rugged terrain and the deep lakes, hunting game and fishing were not as profitable for prehistoric people with their primitive nets and spears. This difference became even greater with the development of a subsistence on wild rice which abounded in the shallow lakes but was almost absent in the Trout Lake region. Nevertheless, people did use this region. The waterway from Wabana upstream from Trout was part of the chain of lakes and streams which were used, along with short portages, to reach the Rice River which had access to the Bigfork River and Hudson's Bay watershed from the Prairie River and Mississippi watershed. This then was the highway for these peoples, much the same as Highway 38 is the highway we use to reach Bigfork today.

The earliest peoples came sometime before 2,000 years ago, during the period known as Archaic. Little is known of this group of peoples; how long they stayed, what they were doing, or if they returned periodically. What they did leave behind, at the remains of their campfires, were chips of stone where they sharpened their tools, charcoal from their fires, and bits of bone from their meals. Other finds include a lost tool and bits of cracked rock left where someone dropped them. Still later peoples would leave broken bits of pottery from pots which did not stand up to the rigors of the trip through the area. These peoples, identified as the Sandy Lake Culture by archaeologists, lived in this region 1,000 years ago. These were peaceful times, but this was not to last. Wars would be fought and blood shed for this country of lakes and streams; it may be that the little

corner called trout Lake may have escaped and remained a peaceful place throughout the conflict period.

By the 1650's the French began exploring the upper Great Lakes region for furs and the fabled Northwest Passage to the Orient. With the French came the Ojibwa in search of a better place to live. In their path were the Dakota whose forefathers had lived here for a thousand years since the broken pots were left on the shores of the lake. In the battles that were to follow the Ojibwa would be victorious, for the past 250 years they can claim this land as their own, even warfare continued between the tribes into the 1820's and 1830's. Whether the fur traders or war parties passed through the area of Trout Lake will never be known will never be known for certain as they left no sign of their passing if they had. For all practical purposes the historic period for the Trout Lake region did not begin until 1872 when the government surveyors began the job of establishing township lines through the region. One hundred and eleven years is a very short time in comparison to the thousands that had passed since the first man stood on these shores; with these thoughts in mind, it is understandable that a feeling of humbleness come over a person gazing from these shores today.

The first government surveyor to record his work in this region was Nathan Butler. Nathan and his crew came into Township 57 North Range 25 West in September of 1872. He returned in November of 1972 to finish the work in areas where the crew had to cross lakes, being able to do so over the ice of now frozen waters. He describes the area as quite rolling with soils of second and third rate, and estimates that there is twenty million board feet or more of white and red (Norway) pine in the township. The stream draining Trout and Wabana Lakes is described as 2 rods (33 feet) wide, and a foot deep with a strong current and drivable for logs. Nathan also mentions quite a number of settlers in the township who had followed up the survey and built their shanties since the lines were run and he returned to do the work on the frozen lakes. He was unable to locate the owners of these shanties or to give the places names.

Eli W. Griffin was also a government surveyor, he came into the region in February and March of 1873 to complete the survey of the remaining townships within the area now the Trout Lake tract. Township 57 North Range 26 West was surveyed in March, Eli notes a claim shanty had been built 33 feet west of the section corner to the northeast corner to the township, in the township to the north. He also records considerable white pine of fair quality located in the eastern portion of the township.

Township 58 North Range 25 West was surveyed by Eli and his crew in February of 1873. Eli states that the timber along the shore of Trout Lake is mostly birch and aspen. While running east on a random line between Sections 20 and 29, he notes that at 62.50 chains a claim shanty lies 30 links (19.80 feet) north of the line. There was no occupant at the time of the survey. From the quarter-corner of Sections 30 and 31 Eli records that D. Y. Wheeler's claim shanty bears 45 degrees East, 3 chains distant (198 feet). There was good quality pine in both sections where the claim shanties were located, and it is most probable that the owners of these shanties were more interested in obtaining title for the timber than for any other reason. In the general description of the township Eli records that there are two settlers in the township, D. Y. Wheeler claims the SENE, N1/2 SE, and the SWSE of Section 30. Edward Wilder claims the W1/2NE, SENW, and NESW of Section 31, with good improvements. Edward Wilder had built a cabin and was living here at the time of the survey of 1873. He also must have constructed out buildings by the time of the survey because Eli considered his place as having good improvements. D. Y. Wheeler was also at his claim shanty at the time of the survey, but it seems that his was not constructed as substantially as Edward Wilder's.

In March Eli and his crew surveyed Township 58 North Range 26 West. He notes once again the claim shanty 50 links (33 feet) west of the southeast corner of Section 36, no present occupant. The white and Norway pine timber is of good quality. *(to be continued)*

## **WCOLA WATER TESTING**

*Last year's (2007) water testing didn't happen, due to a bad start, and we postponed until 2008. This year the people and equipment were ready for ice-out samples, but the ice refused to go out when they were there to take samples. No water available. We really have to have tests this year, to keep up our record, so the crew is going ahead with the rest of the samples.*

*We are very fortunate to have Richard Brasch in charge of this important function!*

## NEED FOR VEHICLES!

In November of 2007 the Itasca Water Legacy Partnership in cooperation with ICC was given a grant of about \$320,000 to monitor the water quality of over 140 recreational development lakes in Itasca County. John Downing and Jack Jones have volunteered their time to supervise and make sure that the testing is done adequately to satisfy MPCA and make the data collected credible. We had applied for additional funds but that grant was turned down. At present students from ICC have come forward who will have paid positions to go out and collect the water samples. The process is fussy and needs to be done correctly. Once the water is collected ( 10 samples over the next two years per lake) some of the analysis needs to be done at a certified laboratory, John and Jack are coordinating that process. By the way John and Jack are renowned Limnologists at Iowa State University and University of Missouri respectively. We are need of boats and vehicles, preferable boats under 18 feet in length that are not junk. They need to be dependable but not beautiful.

Both items can be given to the ICC foundation, the vehicles would be great if they had less than 100000 and are newer than 10 years. If you feel that you are unable to contribute a boat or a vehicle, we would appreciate a monetary contribution designated for water testing equipment. The parameters that will be tested are Phosphorus, nitrogen, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll and some others which will provide good baseline indications of the health of the water body. The intent is to develop more and more lakes each year. We realize that it would be great to look at the entire watershed but at this time we need to concentrate on the lakes of the county. If you are able to help out or know someone who can please forwarded this request to them.

Thanks for consideration!

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