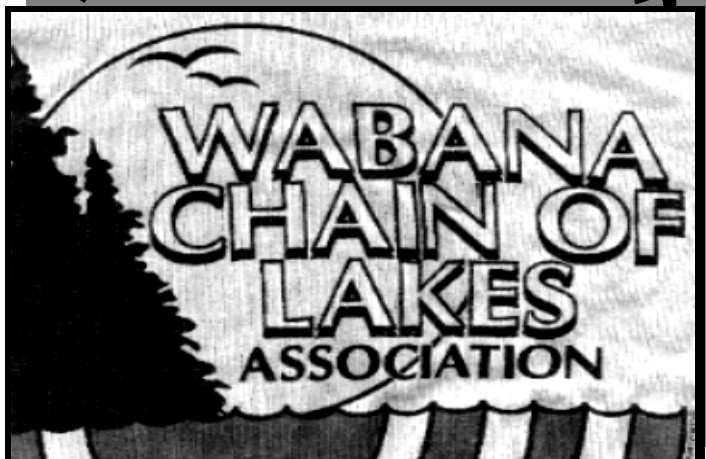


The Chain Letter

of the



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

August 2008

Volume 12, Number 4

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

For many years, I have been president of our wonderful lake association. As president I had the opportunity to work with so many good people. We have a great advisory committee, and I hope to continue to work on this committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our membership for their strong support, and great friendship. I also want to say thanks to all the volunteers, when we needed help our membership jumps to help out. So thanks to everyone and I look forward to working with our next president. I hope to see you all at our next meeting on August 16th. --Dick

NOMINATIONS

From the editor, Bill Downing

At the Historical Committee meeting last week I chatted with Sherry Miner about who they will nominate to take Dick Chambers' place at the head of the organization, and she indicated that although they had talked with many people, there was nobody who would take the job.

Our By-Laws state that we must elect a President and Vice President at the August meeting this year, and Dick says that after many years as President, he would like to step down. The Vice President, Lloyd Adams, has taken on a heavy responsibility elsewhere in the community, and would like to continue as Vice President, but is not ready to move into the presidency. Where do we go from here?

It's my opinion that we must not let the wonderful work that Dick has done for the past years just die out from lack of interest! We need a strong and active Association, so we will be ready when the crunch comes, from whatever direction.

I told Sherry that I would run for President, if nobody else will. If elected, I will work as hard as I can for the Association, but it should be remembered that I am 86 years old and am not a resident. It is my hope that when Dick calls for "other

nominations from the floor", somebody will agree to run against me, and be elected. Isn't it time that one of you "baby boomers" took this responsibility?

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING?

Yes, this is where you usually look for minutes of the last meeting, but they will be found in the *July* minutes, since we had no meeting in July, but had the Picnic instead. So bring last month's *Chain Letter* with you to the August 16 meeting, if you want to discuss the Minutes.

REPORT ON THE PICNIC

From Lynnette Bryant, Chair

2008 18th Annual Picnic Report

This year we welcomed approximately 56 friends and families. What a wonderful turn out!

I'd like to thank the following individuals who volunteered their time to plan and help work at our picnic to make it a success:

Jean & Dennis Koewler

Mary & George Klacan

Nancy Ellsworth

Pat & Dick Chambers

Carol & Gary Burkholder

Lynette & Steve Bryant

Vicki & Lloyd Adams

We'd also like to offer a special thank-you to Bill Downing who entertained us by sharing his memories of the 1930's in the Wabana Lake area.

Congratulations to Ken Zimmer (Wabana Lake) and Marvin Oman (Little Wabana) who were winners of this year's door prizes, a box of Pearson's Nut Goodie's and Salted Nut Roll Bars. Also congratulations to Annette Linder (Wabana Lake), our grand prize winner of a \$50.00 gift certificate to the Forest Lake Restaurant in Grand Rapids.

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's picnic! If you missed joining us this year, mark your calendar for Saturday, July 18, 2009. We'll see you there!

AUGUST PROGRAM

From Bill Berg

We have an outstanding program for our August 16 meeting. John Zazada, retired U. S. Forest Service Researcher and one of the originators of "Goods in the Woods," will talk about some of the many "often hidden" resources that the forest provides, besides trees. John will also show some of some of his birch bark handiwork and other crafts.

DUES FOR 2008

In the September issue we will, as usual, publish the names of paid members for this year. Often we have people who just forgot, and feel embarrassed to be delinquent. You can check with Jean Koewler at the meeting on August 16, to see if you are on the paid list, and if not, pay your \$20 right then. Is that convenient or what? Oh yes—if you're not paid, you should not vote.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

From Roger Linder

This summer the committee has been active in several areas. We have as you can see begun publishing in the newsletter, and hope that you enjoy reading about our past. In the future we will continue to do this with the stories, pictures etc. that you send us. Included in this month's mailing is another copy of the form to help facilitate your providing this information.

Files to store this info. have been established at the town hall. Currently there are files for Trout, Little Trout, Bluewater, Wabana, and our Township areas. As the info. grows furthermore detailed breakdowns will be provided.

Contact has been made with the Itasca County Historical society. With their help we will be able to archive our information with them. Their systems allow photos, letters etc. to be archived, retrieved, and copied with the use of computers, and provides permanent access for all future generations. A recorder has been purchased and the process of gathering historical input from our long time residents began this month. Thank you for all your input to date, and we look forward to hearing from all of you.

LOON COUNTS

And now the matter that perplexed me for so many years, and still does to some extent. I now understand that two different counts are made. One reported by Bill Berg is an official state count that has been going on for many years. It omits Wabana and Bluewater completely, and does include lakes around Spider Lake. The other count is of our chain of lakes.

MLMP COUNT—Bill Berg

The loon surveys that are part of the Minnesota Loon Monitoring Program (MLMP) were completed in late June and early July. The MLMP surveys are part of a monitoring program in Itasca, Becker, Ottertail, Kandiyohi, and Aitkin-Crow Wing Counties. The Itasca MLMP survey block does not include Wabana, but the more general DNR loon survey does. The results for 2008 are:

Trout Lake 16 Ad, 0 Juv
Little Trout Lake 1 Ad, 0 Juv
Spider Lake 27 Ad, 0 Juv
Sand Lake 4 Ad, 0 Juv
Sunrise 1 Ad, 0 Juv

It may be significant that no young loons made it on these five lakes. There was one loon chick with its mother towards the south end of Trout in late June, and this pair was seen swimming to the more protected NW bay a couple days later, but it did not make it. Also, the high Spider count was partly due to one group of 13 loons.

DNR VOLUNTEER COUNT—Roger Linder

The annual loon count was accomplished on July the 25 after a one day rain delay. Ken Zimmer, Dennis Koewler, Roger Linder, Doug Griffin, Jim Edwards. We spent the morning criss-crossing our lakes for the 5th annual count.

The following is a summary of our counts.

Lake	Adults	Chicks
Wabana	30	0
Bluewater	4	4
Big Trout	33	0
Little Trout	2	0
Total	68	4
2006	45	0
2005	45	8
2004	49	7
2003	54	9

Our figures are part of the volunteer loon survey for the state of Minn. In 2007, 302 watchers counted 1558 adults and 477 chicks. As I'm sure we have all

observed chicks earlier in the year, it seems they are the victims of other of nature's critters. Crow Wing last year reported 192 adults and 80 chicks. While we can start providing nesting platforms the chicks may still fall prey to predators. Our loons are not without fault, there were 2 reported instances of loons eating ducklings.

TROUT LAKE HISTORY

From Bill Berg

Editor's note: this is the third installment of the historical manuscript, A History of the Trout Lake Area and the Joyce Estate, by Keith Madson, retired U. S. Forest Service Technician. This installment takes us into the early log drives, and the first settlers in the area.

It was the Itasca Lumber Company that built the permanent dams at Clearwater Brook, Wabana, Bluewater and Trout Lake. The Wabana dam was rebuilt from the original dam put in by the Days. William LaCroix was the foreman for the Itasca Lumber Company and supervised the construction of these dams. Like T.B. Walker, the Itasca Lumber Company relied on contract loggers to get their timber out of the woods and banked for the spring drives. One such logger in this area during these years was Tony Dwyer; he may very well have logged the timber for the Itasca Lumber Company. In 1904 Dwyer took a drive out of Trout and Wabana lakes, booming across Wabana; he may have been logging for several firms at the time. To give an idea of the scope of Tony Dwyer's operations, he had crews working on the Sandy River with his partner Frank A. Blakeslee from the 1896 through 1901, was in the Blackduck area in 1898 with Long as his partner, and was also working in the Hibbing region with Pow-ers.

The Itasca Lumber Company was expanding its operations in Itasca County. Besides logging the Prairie River watershed, in 1891 J.P. Sims built a logging railroad north out of Cohasset for ten miles, started logging and sending the logs down the Mississippi River to the Itasca Lumber Company mill in Minneapolis. Because of problems, this line was abandoned in 1892 and was not used again. The materials for this were removed, and in 1897 a new line was started at Deer River. The logs were hauled to Deer River by rail and dumped into White Oak Lake for shipment to Minneapolis via the Mississippi River. During this period of expansion H.C. Akeley became more involved with his H.C. Ake-

ley Lumber Company and let others take the reins of the Itasca Lumber Company. W.T. Joyce took a most active part; in 1904 the Itasca Lumber Company built a sawmill on the shores of White Oak Lake, which was referred to by the local townspeople as the Joyce-Pillsbury mill.

In 1904 the Itasca Lumber Company had completed its logging operations in the Trout Lake region. However, some clean-up operations were going on for a few years after this by a few small operators. It was during these last years of logging that the first permanent settlers started to move into this area.

Frank and Anna Larson moved to Trout Lake in 1890 from Wisconsin, after emigrating from Sweden. In 1895 the deed for their property was made in Anna's name. The Larsons were located on the west side of Trout Lake, along the Bigfork Trail. Nels Felstet of Bigfork frequently stopped on his way to and from Grand Rapids. Frank and Anna's daughter, Olga, was the reason for these visits; he eventually married her. In 1900 he convinced Frank to move north to Bigfork, and the move was made during the summer, leaving the log home vacant on the shore of Trout Lake. The Larsons would eventually lose the land during a mortgage foreclosure in 1916.

According to a newspaper account, Anton Haglee homesteaded on the thoroughfare between Trout and Interlachen (Little Trout) in 1903. Anton had a rather difficult time while living here because of a lack of roads, and his place was north of the creek. Once the road to the area was constructed, he still could not reach his place by automobile because there was no bridge over the creek. Nevertheless, he was able to construct a fine log home and provide for his family. During the school year Mrs. Haglee and the children stayed in town in order for the children to complete their education. Also according to the article, "Mr. Haglee has a fine orchard, some of the fruit are from seedlings which he developed himself, and an apple thus produced is of good size and excellent quality. Anton, as he is known by all the folks around the lake, is an old timer, hospitable, a good worker in community affairs and has served several times as town officer."



K. Matson photo

Anton Haglee's cabin on the shore of Trout Lake in August 1984, Harold Unger, the current owner had recently put a new roof on the cabin.

The writer perhaps colored the truth in his praises of the developments on Trout Lake. Anton's home was a log cabin of modest size, functional if not fancy. The apple orchard consisted of a few trees of the crab apple varieties, perhaps a bit larger fruit than normal, but were excellent for canning and jellies. Anton had cleared a small area for a garden and kept some sheep. When he was having problems with bear bothering the sheep, he moved them out to a small island in the bay to the west of his home and built a small shed to house them. The Haglee home was located on the top of a hill, a considerable distance from the lake, a practice not normally done in that day and age because water had to be carried from the lake for drinking, cooking and all other uses. Nadine Martin speculated that Anton built on the hill because the spot reminded him of his native Norway. Records indicate that Anton filed for a patent of his land on February 18, 1907, and that his second son was born in Wisconsin in 1908. Anton had been a machinist for the railroad before moving to the Trout Lake region, having come to the United States in 1872 from Norway. So it is uncertain that the year of 1903 is an accurate date for his arrival; no official records are available to substantiate that claim.

In 1904 Irv Martin moved to the north end of Trout Lake; at this time John McAlpine was logging to the north of Trout in the Ruby Lake region. He was landing his logs on Trout Lake and had a logging camp; which was located in the same opening as Martin's.



ICHS photo

Irv Martin's at the head of Trout Lake.

McAlpine was there for two or three years after Martin moved to this location. It was shortly after moving to Trout Lake that Irv started boarding hunters and fishermen, and thus started the resort industry on Trout Lake. In 1900 Dave Cochran built a 26-foot steamboat, powered by a six-horsepower engine, to take people staying at his Wabana Hotel out on the lakes. In 1901 he built a 35-foot launch to haul more people; the old boat eventually came into Anton Haglee's possession and for years sat on the shore of Trout Lake below Anton's home. After Martin moved to the north end of the lake, Cochran started bringing people up to Trout Lake. Some of his guests, like Barney Kay from Elgin, Illinois, started coming to Martin's to be able to fish for bass on the nearby Spider Lake. Barney had started coming to Cochran's in 1900; he stayed at Wakeman's in 1901 but moved up to Martin's for his vacations once the resort was opened. By 1901 Barney had become a permanent summer resident of Trout Lake and eventually built his own cabin on the west shore.

Dr. McGee and M.S. Burroughs built the first cabins for summer homes on the north end of Trout Lake, on the hill to the east of Martins, in 1903. Within a few years they were joined by E.J. Colley, Dr. and Mrs. Evans, and the Kileys, making a nice little community at the head of the lake during the summer months. Burt Pearson was living on Sand Lake, a few miles to the east of Martin's. A post office was set up at the resort for those people living in the area and Martin was placed on the postal maps. Today, even though the post office has been long closed, the name Martin still remains on the County plat maps.

On March 16, 1906, the Martin home burned to the ground while the family was in Grand Rapids. Wilbert Corwin, a handyman living with the Martins, was at home at the time of the fire. It was speculated that the fire started in the chimney, as Corwin had just put wood into the stove before going out to do some chores. He returned to find the home on fire but was unable to control it or salvage any of the belongings.

Everything owned by the family was lost in the blaze. Irv always blamed Corwin for the fire; and because of ill feelings, Wilbert moved out and built a shanty up in the woods behind the Martin place. In later years he worked for other summer residents including the Iretons.

In 1908, Ernest Francis, owner of the Blue Line Café in Excelsior, came to the area and built a cabin on Wabana Lake. His restaurant was located within the resort area of Lake Minnetonka; the summer months were the busiest months of the year for his business. Once the tourist season had ended for another year, Francis would close up the restaurant and head north to his cabin on Wabana Lake to spend the winter. There were no roads to his place; the old Bigfork Trail went up the west side of Trout Lake, this being the closest road. Ernest would ski in to his cabin from the Bigfork Trail during his infrequent trips to town.

On March 11, 1913, Horrace W. Barber, of Carroll County, Iowa, purchased land from the Felthouse Land Company on the south side of Little Trout Lake. Within two weeks after this date he sold a portion of the land to his brother-in-law, William Henry Robertson, also of Carroll County. Bill Barber moved his family to the cabin he built overlooking Little Trout Lake south of Anton Haglee's. Will Robertson, a bachelor, also came north, building his cabin on the south shore of Little Trout Lake, east of Barber's ¼ mile.

In 1915 the Iretons came to the Martin's resort for the summer; the next year they had purchased the John McAlpine place to the east of Martin's, on the hill. Barney Kay had been coming to the Martin's since 1905 to spend the summers. When he retired from his job as a watchmaker in Elgin, Illinois he built his cabin on the west shore of the lake.

In 1907 H.C. Akeley transferred his interest in the lands around Trout Lake to the Itasca Lumber Company. It was during this period that Akeley was less involved with the activities of the Itasca Lumber Company. The area had been logged; the company had no more need for the land, and in fact probably had it up for sale. In other areas of Itasca County, the Itasca Lumber Company was selling the cutover lands to immigrants and other settlers that were moving into the area. Those lands that were sold were better suited to cultivation than the Trout Lake region, and these lands remained idle. In December of 1917 David Gage Joyce, the son of W.T. Joyce, began purchasing the lands held by the

Itasca Lumber Company in the area around Trout and Spider lakes.

YOUR HISTORY

We need your help in preserving the history of our Chain of Lakes Area. As a past or present resident, whether seasonal or permanent, you are part of this history.

It is our hope that a permanent, locked display will be set up in the Wabana Town Hall, and the tapes, pictures, and narratives will be available for a future historian can use them to write a definitive history of this Chain of Lakes.

Could you write a 1-5 page personal narrative of your memories for our archives? Doing so will provide an invaluable database as we proceed in developing a history of the area. If you find it easier to answer questions, you could start by thinking about questions such as the following—do not feel constrained by the questions, however—say what you want to say, the way you want to say it.

1. What significant events occurred in your life relevant to the chain of lakes?
2. How did you become a seasonal or permanent resident of the Chain of Lakes?
3. What effect has the Chain of Lakes had on your life?
4. What is your favorite personal experience on the Chain of Lakes?
5. What is your favorite story about someone or an event on the Chain of Lakes?
6. Do you have any old photos, diaries, letters, artifacts, etc. about the Chain of Lakes that the WCOLA Historical Committee could have or copy for its archives? Please identify persons and places in photos. We are willing to arrange the copying for you.
7. Please send a photo of yourself, and/or your home or cabin, with your story.
8. Who previously owned your residence (very important)? Please list the name and address, if possible

HISTORY OF WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES

THE WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Please circle: Permanent or Seasonal resident or Visitor of Wabana, Little Wabana, Trout, Little Trout, Blue-water Lakes or Surrounding Area.

Name: _____
(first) _____ (middle) _____
(last) _____

Summer address: _____

Phone: _____

Winter address: _____

Phone: _____

Your place of birth: _____ Birthdate: _____

Name of spouse: _____

Birthdate: _____

Mother's name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Father's name: _____

Birthdate: _____

Children's names and birthdates

How many years has this residence been in your family? _____ since (year):

Previous owner (name/address if possible): _____

If you have trouble starting, try answering one or more of the following questions—but don't let them tie you

down. Write the way you want to.

1. What significant events occurred in your life relevant to the chain of lakes? Please answer in chronological order.
2. How did you become a seasonal or permanent resident of the Chain of Lakes?
3. What effect has the Chain of Lakes had on your life?
4. What is your favorite personal experience on the Chain of Lakes?
5. What is your favorite story about someone or an event on the Chain of Lakes?
6. Who previously owned your residence (very important)? Please list the name and address, if possible.

Do you have any old photos, diaries, letters, artifacts, etc. about the Chain of Lakes that the WCOLA Historical Committee could have or copy for its archives?

Yes _____ No _____

Please identify persons and places in photos. We are willing to arrange the copying for you.

Please send a photo of yourself, and/or your home or cabin, with your story.

Would you be willing to give a one-on-one interview with someone on the committee?

If a book is ever written about the people and places on the Wabana Chain of Lakes, may we include the information you submitted? Yes _____ No _____

Please mail to: Wabana Chain of Lakes Historical Committee, c/o Roger Linder, 36542 Birch Trail, Grand Rapids, MN 55744. Phone 218-326-2266.
rlinder@msn.com

**This is the August
2008 issue of *The
Chain Letter*, the
newsletter of the Wa-
bana Chain of Lakes
Association.**

**(If you have not paid your \$20
dues for 2008, the meeting is a
convenient time to do it.)**

**Meeting on August 16, 2008:
8:30 am Treats and Greetings
9:00 am Program**

John Zazada, retired U. S. Forest Service Re-
searcher and one of the originators of "Goods in
the Woods," will talk about some of the
many "often hidden" resources that the forest pro-
vides, besides trees. John will also show some
of some of his birch bark handiwork and other
crafts.

9:30 am Business meeting

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