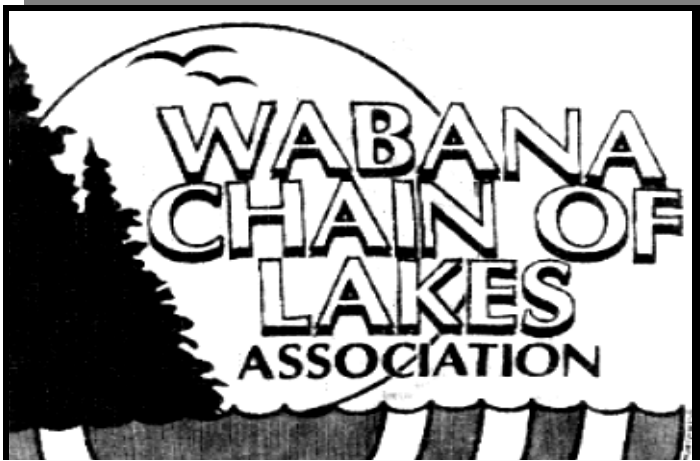


# The Chain Letter

of the



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

# June 2009

Volume 12, Number 2

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Add your items to it by sending to Mark Miner,  
[mminer@minergroup.com](mailto:mminer@minergroup.com)

NEXT MEETING IS June 20<sup>th</sup>  
WABANA TOWN HALL.  
Mark Your Calendars!

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I thought the May meeting was excellent. In planning for the coming year, there were so many great ideas from so many bright minds, that I could hardly keep up.

It would be very helpful if some more people would volunteer to serve on Standing Committees. Please call or email Secretary Gail Olijnek (218-326-2431) [golijnek@cpinternet.com](mailto:golijnek@cpinternet.com) , or call the Committee Chairs directly and volunteer.

- Advisory Committee. Bill Downing (218-326-4730 or 651-644-9625, [wdowningster@gmail.com](mailto:wdowningster@gmail.com)). We need a volunteer from Bluewater to take Steve Bryant's place. I asked George Klacan, but he had to refuse due to existing conflicting commitments.
- Hospitality Committee. Kathleen Willson (326-3257 [kwillson@comcast.net](mailto:kwillson@comcast.net)) This is the group that does the Picnic, as well as treats before meetings, and other hospitable activities.
- Membership Committee. Dick Chambers (218-326-2809 [dickpat9@msn.com](mailto:dickpat9@msn.com)) Checks to see who on the lakes is member, who's not, increases membership in Wabana and adjacent townships, membership brochure.
- Environment Committee. Ken Zimmer (218-327-0911 [kbzimmer@q.com](mailto:kbzimmer@q.com)) Secchi disk readings, lake testing, surface water, prevention of exotic animal and plant pests, road cleanup. Many folks needed to watch public landings on holiday and heavy usage weekends.
- Historical Committee. Roger Linder ( 218-326-2266 [mlinder@msn.com](mailto:mlinder@msn.com)) Collects historical records, sorts, stores efficiently, interviews, probes old memories.

- Publications Committee. Susan Lick (326-6837 [SusanLick@msn.com](mailto:SusanLick@msn.com)) Responsible for Newsletter, brochures, other public notices.
- Outreach Committee. Lloyd Adams (218-326-2130 [lradams\\_94@msn.com](mailto:lradams_94@msn.com)) This is an entirely new standing committee, formed with the hope that we can function more effectively beyond our Township boundaries, to mesh better with ICOLA, Minnesota Waters, the cabin owners' organization, and others. Maybe there are grants we could apply for. The responsibilities of the committee would be up to its membership.
- Audit Committee. Mary Lou Klacan (218-326-8436, [gklacan@q.com](mailto:gklacan@q.com)) A legal requirement. Annually audits books. Members cannot be officers of the organization.
- Program Committee. Co chairs are Bill Berg (326-4253 [terblberg@uslink.net](mailto:terblberg@uslink.net)) and Susan Hawkinson (218-327-2533 [susanondoan@msn.com](mailto:susanondoan@msn.com)) The Committee brainstorms what programs to have, schedules, invites, introduces programs.

On May 28, after the road cleanup, the Hospitality Committee met with the Advisory Committee and Bud Sage from the Township Board to try to decide what to do about the Annual Picnic. The upshot, though incomplete, was to keep things pretty much the way they have been, but also work toward having some sort of fun time with the Township.

Having a picnic with the Bible Camp on Bluewater was considered too complicated, though a nice gesture, especially since the Bible Camp annually invites the Bluewater population to a picnic. It was decided to work with the Community Fund Committee of the Township to see what, if anything, they would like to do—ice cream social? Joint picnic? (But not on July 18, the date we have decided on for holding our traditional Summer Picnic.) A spirit of friendly cooperation dominated the discussion. The Advisory Committee voted an expenditure of up to \$500 for the Picnic. If members would like to put this on the Agenda for discussion at the June 20 meeting, please add it.

I have read and heard about awful boating accidents on other lakes in Minnesota, with people drowned, crashed, and killed by motors; and I am grateful that we have had nothing of that kind on

our lakes for years. I urge all of us to take great care, especially during fast activities (e.g., water skiing, jetting) to give us another safe summer. Also, help in every way to keep alien plants and animals out of our precious waters.

Please don't forget--\$20 dues are due now, and will be delinquent on July 1!

With great affection for all, Bill

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### Meeting Dates for 2009

SUMMER 2009 Meeting Dates (3rd Saturday)

**Saturday, June 20**

9 a.m. Program: **Fisheries Research** on Local Lakes including Wabana – Cindy Tomcko (DNR Fisheries Biologist)  
10-11 a.m. Meeting

**Saturday, July 18**

Program: **Poachers Caught** - Tom Chapin (author and retired DNR Warden)  
**PICNIC** - No Meeting (the time and place will be announced at the June 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting and appear in the next WCOLA Newsletter)

**Saturday, August 15**

9 a.m. Program: **Chain of Lakes Research Project** - Jessica Colburn (last years recipient of The Betsy Downing Student Research Award)  
10-11 a.m. Meeting

**Saturday, Sept. 19**

9 a.m. Program: To Be Announced  
10-11 a.m. Meeting

**All Meetings will be at the Wabana Town Hall and will last 1 (one) hour!**

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**WCOLA Meeting Minutes - May 16, 2009**  
(Susan Lick for Gail Olijnek, WCOLA Secretary)

**Call to order** at 9:00am by President Bill Downing. The 25 members in attendance introduced themselves.

**The agenda** was presented and reviewed; a motion was approved to adopt the agenda.

**Minutes** of the September 20, 2008 meeting were approved as printed in the WCOLA Newsletter.

**Treasurer's report** was presented by Jean Koewler. A motion was approved to adopt the May 2009 Treasurer's Report. WCOLA memberships of \$20 are due, made out to Wabana Chain of Lakes, send to Jean Koewler, Treasurer.

Balance as of September 18, 2008 \$1,229.80

**Receipts:**

Dues	\$ 500.00
Contributions	\$ 5.00
Lake Sign	\$ 5.00
Hist. Comm. Contributions	\$ 130.00
Total Receipts	\$ 640.00

**Disbursements:**

Instrumental Research	
Report 9-15-08	\$ 890.00
Postage Sept Newsletter	\$ 100.80
Treasure Bay Printing	
Newsletter -8 pages & Scan Historic Wabana Album	\$ 362.98
Total Disbursements	\$1,353.78

Checkbook Balance – 5/15/09 \$ 516.02

CD – Renewal date – 7/22/09 \$ 5,142.64

Total Paid Households: 22

Treasurer Jean Koewler requested permission to pay \$150 Membership fee to "Minnesota Waters" the statewide lake association. A motion was approved.

**WCOLA Advisory Committee** resignations were accepted for Catherine Rudolph, Wabana and Steve Bryant of Bluewater. A list of names was gathered for President Downing to contact and appoint new Advisory Committee members: Diane Rutheford, Bluewater – Bill Bottoms, Bluewater – Chad Persons, Bluewater – Kurt Thompson, Bluewater.

**WCOLA Picnic** and July "no meeting" changes were discussed with the goal of partnering with the Wabana Township inviting the entire Wabana Township community to participate. The WCOLA Advisory Committee and Hospitality Committee's will meet and present the event plans at the June 20th meeting.

**The Betsy Downing Student Research Award** was discussed. Bill Berg suggested the award funds of \$750 be carried over and combined so that an award of \$1,500 bi-annually may be offered. A motion was made and approved. Contributions may be made to The Betsy Downing Student Research Award through The Wabana Chain of Lakes Association; President, Bill Downing, Treasurer, Jean Koewler.

**Environment Committee** chair Ken Zimmer listed the focus areas of the committee and reported on activities this past year including; continuing education on invasive species, The U.S. Constitutional Amendment funding environmental efforts, mercury in water and the Emerald Ash Borer found in St. Paul. WCOLA Environment Committee action items included:

**WCOLA semi-annual road clean up** coordinated by Barbara Zimmer will be Thursday, May 28th at 9am starting at the Wabana Township Hall.

**A "NO WAKE" sign** and loon nests discussion was led by Bill Berg especially concerning a loon nest on Trout Lake. A motion was made and approved that WCOLA purchase two marker buoys and signs to be used at the discession of Bill Berg and Bob Gephart implementation volunteers, to warn boaters of loon nests.

**Adjournment** at 10:00am was discussed with a motion approved to extend the meeting fifteen more minutes.

**Program Committee** member Bill Berg reported Cindy Tomco of The MN Department of Natural Resources will present a program on June 20th at 9am on the Fisheries Research on Wabana Lake. Jessica Colburn, recipient of The Betsy Downing Student Research award will be contacted by Susan Lick to see if she can present her findings at the August 15th meeting.

**The Itasca Water Legacy Partnership** was reported on by David Lick (in attendance) and John Downing (via e-mail). David reported the Itasca Water Legacy Partnership obtained a grant for \$375,000 to test 48 lakes in Itasca County. Itasca County their Environmental Trust Fund gave \$100,000 for a water testing laboratory at Itasca Community College campus. John Downing, PHD and Jack Jones, PHD Limnologists are donating

their time as professors overseeing the lab and its certifications. A laboratory manager has been hired for the Itasca Campus Laboratory.

Water quality lake surveys will be completed this May through September by 12 Itasca Community College Students. An additional shoreline survey will be coordinated by two Itasca Community College students; Asking 1) what people understand about buffers and shorelines and 2) their opinions on lawns or native plants for shorelines.

A grant proposal has also been submitted to have Itasca County's Water Legacy Partnership develop and pilot a program incorporating water science into all elementary schools in Itasca County.

The Itasca Water Legacy Partnership has been funded entirely by grants in their work to bring focus to water quality. With their initial successes in place and growing need for public communication they find they must fundraise in order to move ahead. They announced the IWLP is conducting a sponsorship drive requesting donations of \$20 from individuals.

**Meeting Adjourned** by President Downing. Next meeting Saturday, June 20th; social time 8:30-9:00 am, program 9:00-10:00 am, meeting 10:00-11:00 am.

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### **Committee Reports**

(If you are interested in participating in any of these committees, Please contact the Committee Chair)

**Program** (Bill Berg and Susan Hawkinson) The WCOLA program for Saturday, June 20 will feature Cyndy Tomcko, DNR Fisheries Biologist from Grand Rapids. Cyndy is presently doing fisheries research on several area lakes, one of which is Wabana. This will be a very interesting program, so please tell your friends and neighbors and bring them along.

**History** (Roger Linder) - Our Committee met June 4th. We are gathering and organizing historical data and photos. Two photo albums from Bill Downing cover the family on Wabana from the 1930's thru the 40's. These albums have been scanned and disks stored for future reference. We continue to need your help. Any history or photos can be copied and the originals returned to you.

We have been fortunate to receive the early history of Arrowhead Point. Many thanks go to Martha Gettinger, for the original work and for sharing it with us. The story will begin this month and continue in WCOLA news letter.

**Environment** (Ken Zimmer) Here is a photograph of the crew who pitched in and helped with the last road cleanup project –thanks everyone.



Anyone interested in helping in September – please give Ken a call.

**Hospitality** (Kathleen Willson)

**Membership** (Dick Chambers)

**Publication** (Susan Lick) Got News – email Chris Friedlieb ([peterchris2@msn.com](mailto:peterchris2@msn.com))

**Audit** (Mary Klacan)

**Outreach** (Lloyd Adams)

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### **What is the Itasca Water Legacy Project?**

(Comments by Dave Lick and Mary Blickendorfer):

The IWLP is a community coalition comprised of local business, government, education, resort, and environmental entities. The mission statement of IWLP is “*to explore and enact strategies to maintain and improve water quality in Itasca County, to protect watersheds, and to highlight the impor-*”

*tance of the area's impressively clean water”*. In its first year IWLP accomplished:

- Established a water quality laboratory at Itasca Community College (see comments immediately after this report by John Downing who played the lead role)
- Development of a water quality curriculum for ICC is underway.
- IWLP was instrumental in having the county set up a \$100,000 revolving loan fund for updating septic systems county wide.
- Mary Blickendorfer is conducting grant-funded shore land buffer research on 4 Itasca County lakes: Turtle, Johnson, Mike and Horseshoe. The results will be used to encourage shore land best management practices in Itasca County lakes.
- Submitted a grant proposal to provide water science education in the elementary schools county wide.

IWLP has begun actively fundraising. We will continue to support our activities with grants – but to cover expenses like communicating with the community members and maintaining our relationships with area lake associations our goal is to raise \$15,000. Sponsorship from an individual is \$20. We are also asking lake associations to contribute \$500 to \$1000. All donations are tax deductible. Please make your check payable to the Grand Rapids Community Foundation and write “For the IWLP” on the comment line.

We hope you will agree that for a very reasonable contribution – you will be supporting an energetic group of people working for clean water in Itasca County as evidenced by the results outline in the above report as well as the one just below.. It will be great to have a water resource center located in Itasca County in conjunction with the community college. Thanks for your interest and if you have further questions please contact David Lick.

### **Itasca Water Legacy Project / Itasca Community College Lab Update**

(Report from John Downing)

We have been working on the lab and program throughout the fall and winter and everything is

pretty well on schedule. The laboratory is now completely installed by Limnology laboratory personnel from Iowa State University (my lab) and the University of Missouri (Jack Jones's lab) in collaboration with ICC faculty and a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

Josh McGinniss, Lab Manager, will be starting at ICC the day after Memorial Day. He has been working on an advanced limnology degree in Pennsylvania. ICC is supporting the Water Quality Technology Program by assigning a chemist to the task of coordinating students. We are sampling 192 lakes throughout the county this summer. 147 are part of the MPCA grant and 45 more are lakes in the Bigfork drainage area that the Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District has obtained funding for. We are fielding 6 field crews this summer and have another 4-5 students working in the lab. It will certainly be one of the most information-rich summers concerning Itasca County waters.

In addition to the normal water quality work we are doing, we have two scientists from Holland and another from Brazil. The Dutch scientists are analyzing algal proteins that will tell a lot about types of organisms that live in the lakes and they are using stable isotopes to determine where the nutrients and carbon come from (i.e., from the atmosphere or the watershed). The Brazilian scientist is an expert in the global carbon cycle and is interested in seeing how greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide are cycled through the lake. Rob Striegl from the USGS is also interested in this aspect and will be doing some gas analyses. Further, we continue to collect samples for the US Forest Service to help them analyze mercury concentrations in the lakes.

You can check our progress by looking at the website: Itasca Lakes Data Report (<http://limnoweb.eeob.iastate.edu/itascalakes>). This lab will have full, and certified, capabilities. We are hoping to use it to assess Itasca Waters and train local students in important and employable skills. We are looking toward a future where our great waters are assessed locally using local skills and facilities and local decision makers have the quality water quality data needed to determine how best to conserve and use this important resource....a resource that can be an economic engine if protected and (as well I know from my Iowa experience) an huge liability if abused.

## History of Arrowhead Point on Lake Wabana Part 1 - THE LODGE & CLIFFHOUSE

(Written by Martha Gettinger in 1994 and appearing here in 4 parts this summer presented by the History Committee)

**The Lodge** - Thomas H. Simmons, a lawyer from Cedar Rapids, Iowa and A.W. Lownsbery, a real estate man, also from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, owned several thousand acres of cut timber land around Wabana. They intended to sell to Iowa farmers for farming purposes. To show the land they built a farm house at the base of Arrowhead Point, and in 1903 also built the Lodge in the woods.

A.W. Lownsbery sold out to Thomas Simmons and moved to California.

Thomas H. Simmons and wife Luella had two children, Haven and Deborah. Haven was not

interested in property so Deborah inherited it. Deborah married Amos Meader in 1919 and had one child, Betsy. Betsy married William Downing. His folks had a summer place in the first bay of Wakeman's, called Tower Hill, and they now own a house located on the "picnic grounds" on the north side of Government Point. They also own Government Point.

Deborah Meader sold the Lodge and all the property except Government Point and the "picnic grounds" to "The Colony" in 1951 for \$2,125. "The Colony" consisted of Forrest Sherer, Paul Hill, Wickliffe Ray, D.C. Johnson, Alice Adams Cosler, and William Adams. They intended to tear the Lodge down because it was in such bad shape. Instead, it was sold to Preston and Ruth Eldridge, in 1954. Preston's son Richard lived in Terre Haute and knew D.C. Johnson. When D.C. told him about the property, he knew his parents would want it. Preston and Ruth had two sons, Robert and Richard. Richard and Mary Lou Eldridge now own the Lodge.



(Note - While this photograph was not part of the original write up by Martha Gettinger – it is provided by the Historical Committee for your reference – The Lodge)

**Cliffhouse** - In June, 1904, William Adams, a banker and quarryman from Bloomington, Indiana, and his wife, Retta, came to visit the Lodge along with Charles and Molly Simmons. Charles Simmons was a brother to Thomas Simmons and was an insurance salesman. At the time of the visit, A.W. Lownsbery was the only person at the Lodge. Also, C.V. Smith and family were at the farm house. Lownsbery offered to sell a location to them. William Adams told Charles Simmons that he would finance a fishing shack if Simmons would see to the building.

The summer of 1905 saw cedar, pine, and basswood logs cut up above Simmons Cove, put in the lake and floated down to what we call Boat House Bay at Smith Landing. There, they were peeled and skidded up the hill past the farm and on to the building site. The house was started that summer by workmen C.V. Smith, William Wake-man, and Ernie Poland. It is not known how long it took to build, but the fireplace was not started by June of 1906.

In August, 1906, the families of Charles Simmons and William Adams arrived at the house. There were two Adams children, William and Alice.

An interesting side note is the difficult trip from Bloomington, Indiana, to Arrowhead Point. "A train was ridden to Chicago, then a transfer to the Northwest Station by bus. Another train was taken to Minneapolis. Then, a train to Duluth, and yet another train to Grand Rapids. The night was spent at the Pokegema Hotel. Boarding a farm wagon with spring seats, "our legs dangling and trunks in the back," as, then eight year old Bill Adams tells us, "along with groceries, we traveled for four hours, the sixteen miles on the Prairie River road. The scenery was depressing – burned stubs of birch and the pine trees were black – not much to interest an eight year old boy." He continues, "Halfway, where Prairie River enters Prairie Lake, we came to the Hartley Fitzgerald Ranch. "It was a stopping place for loggers heading north to camps." "Then we went on to Dave Cockran's on Lake Wabana." Cockran's was a two-story hotel (we have a picture of it) between what is now Wa-ga-tha-ka and old Zimmerman's Resort. It was also the only Post Office in the area. At the Cockran's Launch, the Wabana Chief then took the passengers across to the swimming area and everything had to be hauled up the hill to Cliffhouse." Thus ends the long journey told to us by Bill Adams.

Since Cliffhouse no longer exists, I will give a brief description of it, written by Bill Adams. It was a 20 by 20 foot log house with a 20 by 12 foot front porch. Behind, a lean-to of logs consisted of a kitchen and bedroom. Upstairs were four bedrooms with walls seven foot tall, with no ceilings. Clothing was hung on nails and a corner shelf in each room contained a pitcher and wash basin, and a slop jar underneath.

In back of the house stood the frame ice house filled with 16" by 24" by 24" square blocks of ice. The property was inherited by the daughter Alice Adams Cosler.

Cliffhouse was torn down in about 1955 and replaced by the modern house that is there now. Alice, whose husband died very young, had no children. She sold the property to Forrest Sherer in 1971. This house is now called "Cosler House."

***To Be Continued – See the next WCOLA Newsletter for the Part 2 of Martha Gettinger's write up of the History of Arrowhead Point on Lake Wabana...***

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## Loons Nesting at Trout Lake



Please remind folks to observe the signs by the Island at the entrance to Trout Lake. In the past few years, the loons' nest has been destroyed by careless boaters.

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*The Chain Letter of the  
Wabana Chain of Lakes  
Association*

*June 2009*

*There is a lot of pretty good  
stuff inside, Local History,  
Meeting Minutes, Standing  
Committees Reports, Pic-  
tures, Water Quality, Water  
Clarity, and Dates for Up-  
coming Meetings*

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

Our Next Association Meeting will be

**JUNE 20, 2009**

At the Wabana Town Hall. The meeting will last one hour, unless there is a motion to suspend the rules and continue the meeting.

We have an exciting program before the meeting where we will hear about Fisheries Research on local lakes – including Wabana.

Please email me (Bill Downing – President) with suggestions for Agenda topics for this or future meetings.

Treats and Social Time - 8:30 a.m.  
Fisheries Research Program - 9:00 a.m.  
Business Meeting - 10:00 a.m.