

# The Chain Letter

of the



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

# August 2012

Volume 15, Number 3

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Updates, if any, noted in **Red** – update your address books!

Visit our

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## AUGUST 2012 LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello members and neighbors,

Let me begin by saying we had excellent turnout at the June and August meetings. About 45 attended both Robert Leibfried's insightful presentation on Invasive Species and a similar number came last week to listen to Rob Pierces fascinating talk on Northern Pike and using electronic tags on the fish to learn about their habits. Thank you all for finding the time to attend and for being active members of this team "dedicated to the care and preservation of our lakes, for the enjoyment and safety of all" as our newsletter byline has said for many, many years. In addition to great programs I think we have excellent conversations during our business meetings and that is because of all of you who take the time to support this community.

By now you may have noticed that the Unger bridge has been removed from the channel between Trout and Little Trout. There was no public meeting and no announcement to residents. The US Forest Service, after years of saying the bridge would stay and telling residents that they would maintain it, found it a safety hazard and removed it. There will be mixed feelings by members, some saying "Yeah - we can finally get our huge boats to Trout" and others saying that "the extra traffic will ruin the fragile channel and forever change the semi-primitive, non-motorized nature of the former Joyce holdings that go back farther than any of us can remember". If you have strong feelings either way you should make them known to the US Forest Service. If you believe our association should choose to make this an issue, let me know. My conversations so far indicate they have no real plan of action going forward, that the decision was made out of fear for safety by a person who to this day has never even seen Little Trout Lake - and I believe that is true of Big Trout as well. Personally, while I live on Trout and hate to see the bridge come down and the special nature of Trout Lake diminish to be forgotten into the past, my real sympathies are with those who live on Little Trout and will now see their lake turn into an expressway.

On a different topic, the storms of this summer have caused significant damage to township and association members



lands, roads, shorefronts and in some cases buildings. On the north end of Trout Lake - the morning after the storm - it

took two neighbors most of the morning to hack a rough path out to the road and a second group of us to clean it up and cut it back far enough that two cars could pass. There is still quite a mess on the fringe. And while no one was hurt - we were all without power for 5 nights and one of the historic buildings here was badly damaged by downed trees.

These cabins used to be part of the El Rancho Resort and the one that was most damaged has a history going back well beyond El Rancho. It is ironic sometimes - just last month my history section in this newsletter focused on Anton Hagelee - an early homesteader who lived and raised his family on the south end of Trout Lake. I shared one photo of his kids and the Martin kids in front of the schoolhouse here on the north end of Trout. It is likely Anton built the home shown in these photos - and it is certain his family stayed here at times to make attending



school possible. My father discovered that when reviewing photos in the Nadine Martin scrapbook

ok where there is a photo of the inside of the building and several Hagelee children standing in front of the family Christmas tree (original now with the Itasca County Historical Society).

That picture would have been taken between 1905 and 1915 and you can compare board by board and see it was taken in this small cabin seen here with the trees that fell on top removed and now with wall propped up and in the process of being put back together..

I know that many others around our lakes and in our community suffered and may well have had property damage from this same storm. If there are photographs and stories you would share - send them to me for a future issue. Because of all the debris down - the Voneidas from Bluewater contacted me and suggested we meet with a group called Firewise. After checking them out, I invited our local Firewise program leader to the meeting and those attending were so impressed by what they heard that our members voted to join with them and start our own local program thru WCOLA. You can learn more about Firewise below in this issue of the newsletter.

I hope you have all recovered and are enjoying having power and all the nice things we become used to even out here in "the wilderness".

Sincerely, John W. Zimmerman Jr.,  
President - **Wabana Chain Of Lakes Association**

### Upcoming Meeting Dates for 2012

**Saturday, September 15** (coffee, treats, at 8:30 a.m.)  
9 a.m. Darby Nelson, Author of "For Love of Lakes"  
10-11 a.m. Meeting

**Friday, September 7** is the due date for Firewise forms to be completed and returned to Bud Sage.

### **Wednesday, September 26**

9 a.m. Roadside Clean-up - meet at the Wabana Town Hall

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

### MINUTES FROM THE WCOLA MEETING AUGUST 18, 2012

The meeting was preceded by a program on the Northern Pike of Little Wabana Lake presented by Rod Pierce of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

The meeting was called to order by President John Zimmerman at 10:06 am. The Ice Cream Social was noted as having been a success on July 10. The Agenda for the meeting was received.

The Minutes of June 23, 2012 were moved to be approved, seconded and passed.

The Treasurer's report was not available to the meeting.

Environmental Committee report was made by Ken Zimmer. He noted the bridge on Cty 49 was in process and would soon have its decking. He noted the presence of cages at the Public Accesses for weeds. He pointed to the need to get the lead out of fishing tackle. He has attended the variance request on Bluewater Lake. The matter was tabled.

Membership Committee report was made by Alida Zimmerman. The presence of the brochure to bet new members to join was noted. She noted the book by Darby Nelson, "The Love of Lakes."

Roger Linder noted that jet skis and boats are going through the lake connections at high speed. We need no wake notices. Question was raised if DNR or Forest Service had such regulations and signs.

Bill Brink presented the work of Firewise. It was moved that WCOLA join in this project to prevent forest fires and damage to lake homes. Bud Sage agreed to be the coordinator for the program. Lloyd Adams and Warren Chapman agreed to help. Piles of wood products need to be gathered by Sept 15th. It was agreed that red ribbons would mark the piles. It was noted anyone wishing to participate in this falls collection must complete the required form, track their hours and submit to Bud Sage by Sept 10th.

Barbara Zimmer announced that Road Clean Up would be Sept. 19, 2012 at 9:00 am, starting at the Town Hall. (NOTE - THIS WAS LATER CHANGED TO SEPTEMBER 26TH)

Dick Lick noted the Itasca Water Partnership was concerned about invasive species, particularly those brought in by boat. Zebra mussels and Purple Loosestrife were particularly noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am  
Respectfully submitted,  
Arthur L. Merrill

**MINUTES FROM THE WCOLA MEETING JUNE 23, 2012**

The Meeting was preceded by a program on Invasive Species given by Robert Leibfried , DNR Regional Manager for the Division of Ecological and Water Resources.

The Meeting was called to Order by President John Zimmerman, Jr. at 10:20 am. John informed the attendees of the Advisory Committee meeting.

The Agenda of the Meeting was accepted.  
Minutes of the Sept. 11, 2011 meeting were approved by motion, seconded and passed.  
Minutes of the May 10, 2012 meeting were approved by motion, seconded and passed.  
Treasurer’s report of May 10 was accepted.  
Treasurer’s report of Sept 11, 2011 was accepted. As of today there are 61 paid up members.

**Old Business**

1. Ice cream social will be with Wabana Township
2. Picnic – July 21. We need a coordinator and work staff - no one stepped forward.
3. Rod Pierce – will report on his research into the behavior of Northern Pike through electronic methods at the August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**New Business**

1. At the ICOLA meeting it was noted that Split Hand Lakes Association has some unique Invasive Species signs made for their lakes.
2. Environmental Impact Meeting will be held at 10 am Monday for the property on Wabana Lake which involves ice berm removal and a beach blanket.
3. Ted Voneida and his wife reported on the Grant for Shore Restoration that they have carried out at their property and showed pictures. Tory Christensen was the Environmental Architect.
4. John Downing reported on the Water Testing Lab at ICC where staff has been replaced. The testing for WCOLA has been done in 2011 but the report is not yet available. The lab will be paid when the report is received.

Members present introduced themselves to each other.  
The meeting adjourned at 11:05 AM.  
Respectfully submitted -  
Arthur L. Merrill - WCOLA Secretary

**WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES TREASURER’S REPORT  
JUNE 2012**

Balance - May 10, 2012	\$ 8,819.93
Receipts:	
Dues	\$ 1,295.00
Contributions in honor of Phyllis Oliver	\$ 10.00
Contributions	\$ 20.00
Total Receipts	\$ 1,325.00
Disbursements:	
Postmaster-200-45 cent stamps	\$ 90.00
Treasure Bay Printing-June Newsletter 6 pages	\$ 141.11
Minuteman Printing-Address stamper Membership Committee	\$ 32.37
Total Disbursements	\$ 263.48
Checkbook Balance – June 22, 2012	\$ 9,881.45
Total Paid Households: 52	
Designated Funds:	
2011 Water Testing	\$ 3,068.00
Historical Committee	\$ 48.56
Membership Committee	\$ 50.42

**WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES TREASURER’S REPORT  
AUGUST 2012**

Balance - June 22, 2012	\$ 9,881.45
Receipts:	
Dues	\$ 1,620.00
Contributions	\$ 75.00
Total Receipts	\$ 1,695.00
Disbursements:	
Itasca Coalition of Lakes Association 98 members @ \$.50 per member	\$ 49.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 49.00
Checkbook Balance – August 15, 2012	\$11,527.45
Total Paid Households: 104	
Designated Funds:	
2011 Water Testing -	\$3,068.00
Historical Committee	\$ 48.56
Membership Committee -	\$ 50.42
Ice Cream Social -	??

**ROADSIDE CLEAN-UP:**

Pick up trash along Wabana Township roads  
September 26, 2012  
9AM, Wabana Hall, vests and bags supplied  
Questions: Barbara Zimmer 327-0911



## LAKESHORE PROTECTION & RESTORATION

Ted & Swanny Voneida

Until June of this year, the hillside leading from our cabin on Bluewater Lake to the lakeshore had been covered with grass that never grew well because of the tall Norway pines which also inhabit the hillside. The photos show our hillside now, after a large variety of nearly 1500 native plants were put there by Mr. Tory Christensen, our restoration contractor. He also planted other native species along the lakeshore. Mr. Andy Arens of Itasca Soil and Water Conservation District also provided valuable assistance.

The restoration was made possible by a grant from the State of MN to three property owners on the Wabana Chain of Lakes. These include Ted and Swanny Voneida (Bluewater), Pete and Chris Friedlieb (Wabana), and Mark and Alex Zimmerman (Big Trout). The grant was written by Ted Voneida in response to a state program designed to protect and improve lake quality. Many lakes are deteriorating as a result of grasses and other invasive species which are increasing in numbers as a result of increased use lawn fertilizers, erosion and clearing of native vegetation.



We have found this project to be a most interesting, enjoyable and rewarding

experience. The newly planted shade-loving species have transformed our hillside and lakefront into a lovely garden of dwarf blueberries, Jacob's Ladder, wild honeysuckle, cone flowers and many others. Once established, native plants such as these require little care, since they are well adapted to this climate.



Please feel free to drop by our place on Bluewater if you would like to see what we've accomplished. We are at 37892

Ladyslipper Lane, or you can reach us by water from Wabana. Take the channel from Wakeman's Bay directly to our place, which is at the end of the channel leading into Bluewater. Our phone number is 327 6047. Tory can be reached at 612 385 9105. His email address .is



torychristensen@gmail.com. We highly recommend him for advice and assistance, should you want to embark on a project such as this. State funds may still be available if you are interested. For information, contact Ms. Heather Baird, Grants' Administrator, at heatherbaird@state.mn.us Her office is in Brainerd.

### 2012 SUMMER TACKLE BOX

Ken Zimmer, Environmental Chair

Have you added any new lures to your tackle box this summer? Hopefully, if you have, they are non-lead ones. We have taken lead out of paint, toys, gasoline, and food containers. Lead shot was banned for waterfowl hunting in 1991. So why do we continue to use it in fishing tackle?

Loons are especially susceptible to lead poisoning. There are two ways for loons to get lead poisoning from lead fishing tackle. The first is by ingesting the tackle with the bait when they go after a minnow on a hook. Sometimes hooks, sinkers, and spinners are all found in a loon's digestive track. A second way is when loons pick up pebbles from the lake bottom that they use in their gizzard to grind their food. Loons that have been diagnosed with lead poisoning often have a lead sinker or jig in their gizzard. Because of strong acids in the gizzard, along with the grinding action, the lead tackle stays in the gizzard and is not passed further into the digestive tract until a lethal dose of lead has been released. So, it can take only one lead sinker or jig head to kill a loon. After necropsies on more than 1500 loons by Dr. Mark Pokras from Tufts University about 44% of mortality was from lead poisoning in breeding loons. Veterinary Pathologist Tom Cooley with the Michigan DNR, found that the number 2 cause of death for loons was from lead, primarily jig heads. Cause number 1 was drowning in commercial fishing nets on the great lakes.

If you love the loons on our chain of lakes, don't use lead fishing tackle anymore. Ask for non-lead alternatives when you purchase new jigs and sinkers. Make our chain of lakes a safer place for loons.

Sources for lead free tackle:

- Northland Fisherman: [www.northlandtackle.com](http://www.northlandtackle.com)
- Panther Martin: [www.PantherMartin.com](http://www.PantherMartin.com)
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: [www.pca.state.mn.us/sinkers](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/sinkers)

## WHAT IS A FIREWISE COMMUNITY

This came to our attention because part of the Firewise program is about picking up timber and scrub growth debris and many of us could use that help because we have huge piles of the stuff and face the challenge of getting rid of it. But Firewise is much more than just a brush removal service - joining the group requires our organization to take an active role. Here is what they say about themselves:

"Brush, grass or forest fires don't have to be disasters. The National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) Firewise Communities program encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others in the effort to protect people and property from wildfire risks. The program is co-sponsored by the USDA Forest Service, the US Department of the Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters. To save lives and property from wildfire, NFPA's Firewise Communities program teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action now to prevent losses. We all have a role to play in protecting ourselves and each other from the risk of wildfire."

After listening to the presentation at our August meeting, members voted unanimously to have WCOLA work with this organization to make us a Firewise Community. Individual members need do nothing, but I think when any of us considers that fire is a real threat, learning about fire and investing time to make our homes and properties more fireproof will just naturally cause many of our members to want to participate. It may also help us attract new members. As an association, we will set up a committee to do the assessment, build the plan, and implement it. Most will likely focus on educating ourselves with access to skills and knowledge of local firefighters who have experience we can benefit from. You can visit their web site to begin to see what this information is like ([www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)). In the Homeowners section I found the following list of brochures and educational material:

- [Firewise Landscape/Construction Guide \(PDF, 482 KB\)](#)
- [Be Firewise Around Your Home \(PDF, 586 KB\)](#)
- [Firewise Hints: How You Can Be Firewise](#)
- [Preparing a Home for Wildfire Season](#)
- [Wildfire Approaching](#)

- [Explore a Firewise Home](#)
- [Firewise Plant Lists](#)
- [Research About How Homes Ignite](#)

And here is a brief description of their Program:

## About the Program

NFPA's Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program encourages and acknowledges citizen action to reduce community wildfire risk. The program capitalizes on a community's spirit, its resolve, and its willingness to take responsibility for its wildfire ignition potential.

The program provides a flexible template for residents of homeowners associations or small towns to improve their wildfire readiness, and works as an organizing mechanism for initiating wildfire mitigation actions. Participation in Firewise Communities/USA is an ongoing process of community commitment to wildfire safety.

### Participants in the program meet these criteria:

- Complete a community assessment
- Form a Firewise board or committee in order to accept the assessment, create an action plan, and monitor activity
- Hold a Firewise Day event
- Invest at least \$2/capita annually in community mitigation activities
- Complete and submit a program application

We will all learn together much more about being part of this organization. What is important to know now is that because we have taken the action to join and agreed to make the commitments required, Firewise is making available to us the brush / timber removal service. On or about September 17th they will have trucks and heavy equipment in our area and will remove, at no cost, brush, timber, etc of participating members. If you want to participate - you must do the following:

- Clear and pile your debris - pieces must be less than 14 feet long and the piles should be on or near the road for access and not under a power line. It should also be on your property and not obstruct the road or the ditches that the county has to mow and have access to for emergencies.
- **All piles must be "tagged" with a red ribbon** that is clearly visible or it will not be picked up. As Bill Brink,



our Firewise presenter said at the meeting: "One man's debris is another man's firewood".

- Remember - this is our first time working with Firewise and they are squeezing us in at the last minute this fall so we will be learning while we go and many of our piles may not be able to be cleared away until next year based on how many of us respond to this offer.
- Heavy equipment will be used to pick up the piles. The program manager requested that you not cut things up into small pieces as they are harder to pick up. He also reminded us not to put them in places where the trucks will have to cross sensitive ground - like drain fields,

water lines, septic tanks etc. These are large vehicles and will also need headroom clearance.

- Agree to **complete the form on page 7 of this newsletter** (so they know who you are, where you're located, and so we can document the number of hours you took in cleaning up and making ready the debris piles
- **Contact Bud Sage with your completed form by September 7.** Bud has, for this first round, agreed to be the focus for our organization - serving as liaison between WCOLA and Firewise.

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### HISTORY SECTION

Here is a photograph of the Gazebo from the Joyce Estate. Many of you will remember it but never got the chance to climb the hill and find it before it decayed and was carted away by the US Forest Service. It was high up on the southern side of the hill between the main cabin and the tennis court and looked out on Peggy's Point. This photo shows the "foundation" and what is left of the floorboards. If you look closely you can see the roof collapsed and resting on the downhill corner. Any of



you who have access to the internet can find an amazing collection of photographs of every one of the Joyce buildings - all high resolution, black and white taken as part of the historic buildings project - sometime in the 1990's. They are on file and mostly digitized at the Library of Congress site. Here is a URL that will take you there: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/search/?q=Joyce+estate&sp=1&co=hh&st=gallery> . It is a tremendous collection that brings back lots of memories if you boated by the point when it was occupied prior to 1972 or walked around the estate after the Nature Conservancy / US Forest Service took stewardship after that . Sorry I don't have time for a longer history article this month - getting ready for my son to arrive this afternoon.



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

*August 2012*

*Our Next Association Meeting will  
be at Wabana township hall:  
**Saturday, September 15th.**  
There will be coffee and treats at  
8:30am and a great program with  
Darby Nelson, author of "For Love  
of Lakes". Darby will give a talk on  
his book - a subject relevant to any  
of us living on or near water in  
Northern Minnesota at 9:00am (buy  
a book at the bookstore in town  
and he will sign it if you bring it to  
the meeting) followed by our  
regular WCOLA business meeting  
at 10:00am. See you there!*

THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE  
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