

The Chain Letter

of the



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

May 2017

Volume 20, Issue 2

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LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

WCOLA President's musings

May 2017

Here's hoping for another wonderful summer at the lake here in the North Land. I am so looking forward to lots of time on and in the crystal clear waters of the Wabana Chain of Lakes. I might even get some fishing in this year.

WCOLA again sent out a letter in January describing what we are and do as an organization and encouraging all of our lake people to join the association. The letter has apparently had some success as our membership increased last year considerably. We included a survey in this year's package, hoping to get a better understanding of what the lake property owners and association members want/expect from WCOLA. We did get a good response to the survey and I will describe the results later in this newsletter. One thing I will mention now is the overwhelmingly favorable response to our activities regarding the protection and monitoring of the waters. Thank you to all those who responded to the survey and all those who have joined/rejoined this year.

The MPCA has completed their water sampling for 2016 and published their findings on their web site www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html. It again shows that the chain of lakes is very healthy. The MPCA samples the water at 5 sites on three of the Wabana Chain of Lakes two years in a row, then doesn't resample for 10 years unless they find something really surprising. WCOLA will be sampling mid way through the MPCA schedule on at least 7 sites for two years in a row. We will adjust our plan should analysis of the MPCA data and RMB Lab reports indicate need for additional efforts. Unfortunately the RMB analysis and report has not yet been completed, although we are expecting it soon.

Additionally, RMB Labs, through a grant, has completed an AIS Risk Assessment and the report should be

released soon. The assessment includes three lakes of the Chain. The WCOLA Board has decided to establish an emergency fund to deal quickly with AIS problems if found in the Chain of Lakes. The state and county function kind of slowly in these instances and are badly strapped for funding. So we have so far set aside \$2000 from contributions made by our members to be able to react quickly.

We have again provided \$1500 to AIS boat landing inspections, which have already begun for this season. The inspection function now is part of the Soil and Water Conservation District and continues to be led by Bill Grantges. They have recently released a YouTube video of AIS issues, which is excellent and can be viewed at [Itasca AIS Program You Tube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...). Itasca County has also updated their web site www.ItascaAIS.Info. Our water team will again get active in trying to develop a plan for additional actions WCOLA could/should take to minimize AIS problems in our lakes. There is also a new cabin owner on the chain of lakes who has signed-up for the U of M sponsored AIS Detector/Tracker Program. This is a training program dedicated to helping detect early on potential AIS issues.

WCOLA has been fortunate to receive another memorial, which will be used to promote continued water quality. The Blackmore family has provided a donation and memorial in memory of Agnes Blackmore.

The summer calendar of events is shown later in this newsletter, but I wish to highlight a few here. Our spring road cleanup was completed Monday May 8. We had 14 helpers this time and covered a lot of territory. It always amazes me how much trash people throw out of their car windows. The Bluewater Bible Camp has also offered to help and will cover Bluewater Road after Memorial Day. Secondly, our Spring Social Event (Kick-off Saturday June 10) gathering will again be held at the Bluewater Camp Fire Camp. This turned-out to be a great venue and as always is a great opportunity to meet and greet your neighbors. This year we have a real treat with John Latimer attending. John will give a talk on plants and animals of interest from around the lakes. He is always fascinating to listen to and he has spectacular photos. Thirdly, John Downing will again

host the Bill Downing Memorial Summer Solstice Party on Wednesday, June 21, at the Downing cabin and dock. This is again a great opportunity to talk to your friends on the lakes.

Finally, elections for WCOLA President and Vice President are coming up at our annual meeting scheduled for August 12. A nominating committee will be formed to look for new candidates. Additionally we are currently short 2 Board of Director members. So please, if you have any interest in leading or just participating as an officer or board member let us know. This is your opportunity to get involved and bring some new ideas to the association.

Have a great summer at the lake.

Wabana Chain of Lakes Treasurer's Report April 30, 2017

Balance – April 1, 2017	\$ 13,109.63
Receipts:	
Dues	\$ 120.00
Total Receipts	\$ 120.00
Disbursements:	
	\$00.00
Total Disbursements	\$00.00
Checkbook Balance-April 30, 2017	\$ 11,229.63
Savings Account – Water Testing	\$ 5,502.85
AIS Emergency Fund	\$ 2,000.00
Total Paid Households: 108	

WCOLA Survey Results

The survey WCOLA sent out to all Wabana chain of lakes property owners in January was intended to provide the recipients with an opportunity to tell us what is important for the association to do. We received 48 responses, which overwhelmingly supported the actions taken and planned regarding the waters of our lakes. However twice as many indicated “no” for participation as indicated “yes”. The survey results clearly indicate strong support for what WCOLA is doing, especially with regard to water quality, but much less interested in personal involvement. Thanks to all who returned their thoughts on the survey.

Water Quality

AIS inspections got the strongest ratings for importance with strong support for additional activities. Chemical sampling also received high marks for importance. Septic system and Mercury information, variance inspection and fish management information all ranked high but with ever decreasing importance.

Programs

Science based programs ranked highest followed closely by general information and much lower by entertainment.

Member Meetings

Annual only member meetings ranked slightly higher in importance than monthly, but way higher in support. This is kind of puzzling, especially when participation for both showed primarily a “NO”. I wonder if this means won’t attend or won’t participate during the meeting?

Social Events

The responses indicate mediocre rankings for importance for both the kick-off social and picnic, but high numbers for support. Several surveys indicated that they were seasonal people and were not available much of the time. After this season your board intends to relook at continuation of these events.

Firewise, Road Clean-up, Historical

All showed more favorable for importance than not with generally high support counts.

Committee Member, Board Member, Officer

Very few surveys indicated any response at all to these in terms of support and especially participation.

Comments

In creating this survey, my first, I made several mistakes one of which is not keeping names with the survey forms. As a result, most of the comments are from anonymous respondents. My intent had been to individually address each comment with the writer and in a few cases I have been able to do so. For all the other comments, I will try to address them here because I want our members to understand what we are doing and to know we are paying attention to their views.

Comment-Watch the DNR plans very closely as to their management ideas, which are not always in the best interest of protecting the lakes.

Response-We are interfacing with the DNR regularly especially on fish management plans, launch site cleanup and parties at the sites, etc. So far we have been working with IWLP and now Soil and Water on AIS issues. We will look into how to get the DNR more involved via our Water Quality Team.

Comment-I would help or attend, but several comments indicated seasonal or even weekend time only at the lake, so it is difficult.

Response-We struggle as a board with timing on any WCOLA activities involving the membership. Saturdays are bad because they are so important in the summer for visitors and family and no one wants to go to a meeting or event away from the lake. Weekdays are bad because seasonal and weekend people are simply not here. So we reduced the association member meetings to one per year and scheduled other events later in the day. I can’t think of another solution yet.

Comment-I am not sure how to do the chemical or septic checks. But, I am willing to learn.

Response-There isn’t an awful lot for us lay people to do with these items. At this point WCOLA is just providing information on the septic systems usage. Several years ago, there was much more activity with county involvement and others including physical inspections etc. Experts hired for the purpose will most likely do chemical sampling. Our role will probably be

providing a boat and driver once each month in the summers when they do the sampling. The companies we contract with will most likely collect the physical samples and do the actual chemical analysis and report preparation.

Comment-Do you have a directory of members with phone numbers, email and street addresses available for members?

Response-We published a list of members in the fall 2016 newsletter and again in this newsletter. We include the lake the member resides on but not the other info. We have discussed several times the privacy issues around this even though much of this information is in the local phone directory. There is a master database maintained, so any specific need can be answered.

Comment-There was apparently some confusion regarding the meaning of Support and Participate

Response-I attempted to explain them in the survey directions. In any case, what I meant was: Support=do you agree that WCOLA should be doing the item: Participate=will you personally attend and or participate in the item.

Comment-Need to be careful to not overly focus on Lake Wabana at the expense of the other lakes in the chain.

Response-Several of the board members live on Wabana so it is sometimes hard to think more broadly, but we will try. We would really like to have more board members from the other lakes.

Comment-There was some write-in interest in other social activities, specifically the ice cream social and the two solstice parties.

Response-Individual WCOLA members actively participate and to some degree sponsor these activities as well as some others; however they are not WCOLA events per se. The ice cream social and hunters supper are both Wabana Community sponsored, while the solstice parties are hosted by the John Downing family (summer solstice) and the John Zimmerman family (winter solstice). WCOLA does share the cost of the ice cream social with the Wabana Community Fund.

Comment-The DNR handles fish management already.

Response-WCOLA is not attempting to manage the DNR fish program. The DNR invited us to attend a meeting

where they described their initial plans for the next ten years. They also asked for our input. The WCOLA attendees sent a message to all lake property owners describing the key elements of the plan and asked for feedback. We continue to have discussions with DNR representatives on a variety of topics. Our intent is to influence the DNR on critical issues like musky stocking and making Wabana into a trophy fishing lake using the feedback i.e. giving you a voice.

Comment-WCOLA is **not** a government entity and therefore has no place conducting or participating in variance inspections or the like.

Response-You are right, WCOLA is not a government entity and has no authority regarding variance inspections. We are invited to attend county led inspections. However we can be a voice to be heard by those who do have the authority and we feel a responsibility to mention/discuss planned actions, which could harm our lakes.

Comment-With regard to science based programs "whose science"?

Response-Science based in this context was intended to be water oriented topic involving subject matter experts describing the subject with chemical or mathematical figures as opposed to, say fish catches or loon counts.

Comment-Annual meeting is a good idea with possible additional meetings due to issues that could arise.

Response-Our intent is to communicate all issues of significance to members and often all lake property owners. This is primarily done with email, however if really significant, we will augment with snail mail. Additionally, should any major issue require discussion or decision more than just opinion type feedback, meetings will be called.

Comment-In regard to AIS-More money should be put into biological research. Inspections are helpful, but AIS is probably inevitable.

Response-Unfortunately I am afraid you are right with respect to AIS being inevitable, what we can do with inspections is hopefully delay the process until research finds some solutions. More money invested into biological research would certainly help although probably beyond the scope of WCOLA. Although, we have established a fund specifically for emergency situations involving AIS eradication. In the several

meetings and conferences I have attended, I am amazed at how much is already being done by state and other agencies like Sea Grant.

I would be happy to discuss these or other concerns with anyone, so please come to an event like the kick-off social or the summer solstice or the picnic or the annual meeting so we can. If you prefer, send me or anyone on the board a note or email.

Jim Olijnek

2017 Membership List

Jill M Acheson	Bluewater
Pat Adams	Bluewater
John & Jenny Aulick	Wabana
Russ & Evonne Barto	Wabana
James & Marjorie Bekkedahl	Wabana
Craig & Cindy Bender	Wabana
Duane & Anne E. Benson	Bluewater
Jim & Sue Bergan	Bluewater
Joan Birkemeyer	Wabana
Steven & Christine Bjerke	Wabana
Douglas Blackmore	Wabana
Matt & Stephanie Blade	Wabana
Mary Frances & Bill Bottoms, Jr.	Bluewater
Charles & Abby Bradford	Trout
Aaton & Kelly Britton	Trout
Dan & Jeanne Burke	Wabana
Gary & Carol Burkholder	Wabana
Raymond & Mary Carlson	Little Wabana
Robert & Susan Chalgren, Sr.	Trout
John, Dennis & Kathi Chervinko	Trout
James Christmas	Little Trout
Daryl & Michelle Clough	Wabana
George & Libby Colburn	Wabana
Mark & Ellwn Conover	Wabana
Clinton & Stacy Deans	Wabana
John & Marcia Downing	Wabana
Jim & Ann Edwards	Wabana
Thomas & Carole Fagrelus	Wabana
Robert Finlayson	Wabana
Tannie Marsh & Steve Fox	Wabana
Eric & Jan Fredbeck	Wabana
Mary & Bob Gephart	Wabana
Greg & Diane Gough	Bluewater
Doug & Kathy Griffin	Wabana
Richard & Carol Gross	Wabana
Louis & Janeen Gueltzow	Wabana
Jessica Sedivy & Jon Gunderson	Wabana

Rick & Betsy Fischer Hadley	Trout
Dan & Jean Hagen	Wabana
Vicky & Rick Harding	Trout
Jack & Donna Hartung	Wabana
Susan Hawkinson	Doan
Brett, Kyle & Keri Hedlund	Wabana
Richard & Rosalie Hesse	Wabana
Barry & Susan Hines	Trout
Bruce & Jan Hultgren	Wabana
Scott & Mary Hutter	Wabana
Dave Johnson	Wabana
Gregory S. & Janet Johnson	Little Wabana
Jeff & Linda Jorgenson	Wabana
Rex & Melanie Kastner	Trout
Tom & Maggie Klatt	Little Wabana
Dennis & Jean Koewler	Wabana
Danielle Larsen	Wabana
Bruce & Bonnie Larson	Bluewater
Jerald E. & Emma J. Larson	Wabana
Juan & Christine Lazo	Wabana
Dave & Sue Lick	Wabana
Michael & Annette Linder	Wabana
Roger & Nancy Linder	Wabana
William H. & Kathryn Linder	Bluewater
John & Karen Lukens	Wabana
Brian & Penny Lund	Wabana
Peg Landin & Tim Mangni	Pickerel
Mark & Kathy McCullough	Wabana
Paul & Kristen McCullough	Wabana
Mary Ann Mead	Little Trout
Steve & Jean Melin	Wabana
John & Carolyn Merkel	Trout
Margaret Morris & Arthur Merrill	Wabana
Loree & Matthew Miltich	Wabana Twnshp
Jon & Pamela Miner	Wabana
Mark Miner	Wabana
Sherry Miner	Wabana
Lynn & Tim Moratzka	Trout
David & Carolyn Nyren	Wabana
Paul & Barb Oberg	Wabana
Gary & Kim Oja	Wabana
Jim & Gail Olijnek	Wabana
Marvin & Sandie Oman	Wabana
Marvin & Mary Ott	Wabana Twnshp
Sharon Owen	Wabana
Ron & Anne Radecki	Wabana
Mark & Renae Rasmusson	Wabana
L.W.(Bud) & Mary Lou Sage	Bluewater
William & Sue Simmons	Bluewater
John Soll	Wabana
Jan Stein	Wabana
Joe & Martha Stevens	Bluewater

Mary J. Roy & Todd Stone	Wabana
Judy Thompson	Wabana
Kurt & Lavonne Thompson	Bluewater
Matthew & Nicole Stecklein/	Wabana
Greg & Mary Till	
Sylvia Troumbly	Little Wabana
John & Mary Uradnik	Wabana
Jack & Sally Velzen	Wabana
Kelley & Sally Wheeler	Trout
Pamela Wassberg Whittenbury	Little Trout
Merrill Widmark	Wabana
Sally Wilbur	Wabana
Gib & Kathleen Willson	Wabana
Gig & Kristen Willson	Wabana
Jeff & Lorrie Yeschick	Wabana
Brian & Lauren Zimmer	Wabana
Mark Zimmer	Wabana
Ken & Barbara Zimmer, Jr.	Wabana
Mark & Alexandra Zimmerman	Trout
Paul & Debbie Zimmerman	Trout
John & Alida Zimmerman, Jr.	Trout

Your financial support in the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association is our only source of operating funds. It is the principal reason we have a non-profit organization of individuals who can collectively work to build awareness about preserving our chain of lakes - their clarity and quality, their history and social community so that they may be enjoyed now and in the years to come.

For those who haven't yet had an opportunity to join WCOLA this year, we ask that you consider contributing according to its importance to you. Annual Dues \$30. for those receiving WCOLA communications via email. Annual Dues \$35 for those receiving WCOLA newsletters via postal mail. Additional contributions and memorials have been designated by the WCOLA Board of Directors for Aquatic Invasive Species Inspection and Water Quality Testing. A third area of designation is an emergency response to an Aquatic Invasive Species invasion fund.

WCOLA has been fortunate to have received funds as memorials in memory of Agnes Blackmore and Pete Ireton. We thank the families and appreciate their support.

Please make checks out to WCOLA with your name, email address, phone number and address, as well as a second address and the months it should be used. **Send the checks to Jean Koewler (WCOLA Treasurer) 32040 Wakeman Bay Trail, Grand Rapids, MN 55744.**

For more information go to WCOLA.org or on Facebook.

Many thanks to all those who have supported us in the past having created and continued the Wabana Chain of Lakes Association.

Social Gathering Kick-Off

The WCOLA Annual Social Gathering will be held on Saturday, June 10 at 5:30 p.m. It will be held at Camp Bluewater (Campfire Camp on Bluewater), 37508 Bluewater Road. You can drive or boat to the event. John Latimer will be our guest speaker. Bring your own beverage and an appetizer to share.

All lakeshore people are welcome and encouraged to attend. It is a wonderful opportunity to meet your neighbors. Please put this date on your calendar and plan to attend.

Spring Road Clean up



A few of the fourteen helpers standing by most of the trash collected during the May road cleanup.

Mark Your Calendars

2017 Season Events

June 10 Saturday

*Kick-off Social-Bluewater Bible Camp

June 21 Wednesday

Summer Solstice Party-Downing's

July 4 Tuesday

Boat Parade-Lake Wabana

July 22 Saturday

*Picnic-Wabana Town Hall Pavilion

August w/o Aug 14

Firewise Pick-up

August 11 Friday 6-8pm

Ice Cream Social-Wabana Town Hall

August 12 Saturday

*Program- Wabana Town Hall

August 12 Saturday

*WCOLA Annual Meeting-Town Hall

September 20 Wednesday

*Road Clean up

November 4 Saturday 5-8pm

Deer Hunter's Supper – Wabana Town Hall

December 16 Saturday

Winter Solstice Party-Zimmerman's

* WCOLA sponsored

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WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION
Jean Koewler, Treasurer
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Grand Rapids, MN 55744