

The Chain Letter

of the

**WABANA
CHAIN OF
LAKES
ASSOCIATION**



May 2021
Volume 24, Issue 2

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

WCOLA OFFICERS

President: Louis Gueltzow
999-9217 lgueltzow@gmail.com

Vice President: Steven Melin
steven.melin@juno.com (email only)

Treasurer: Jean Koewler
326-4302 djkoewler@paulbunyan.net

Secretary: Susan Lick
326-6837 susanlick8183@gmail.com

Newsletter Editors: Jean & Steve Melin

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Open (Social)

Carl Nordgren (Government Liaison)

Mark Conover (Environmental)

Jean Melin (Communications)

Roger Linder (Historical Committee)

Follow us on the [Wabana Chain of Lakes Facebook](#) page

Visit our web site www.wcola.org.

President's Corner May 2021



Early Ice out this year means spring must be around the corner. Hopefully most of you have had your covid shot by now. If we can reach herd immunity this summer, we can attempt to get our lives back to normal.

This past winter's weather was rather mild with little snow and temperatures above normal. It did seem long and uneventful with the virus keeping people isolated. As things start to reopen, hopefully we can socialize with our friends, relatives and neighbors.

A couple of important things were happening even with the pandemic. The Township Comprehensive Plan Committee was approved at the January meeting. The fundraising effort was also successful in securing a boat decontamination unit. This will allow a hot water wash to help control the spread of invasive species. More details are included on the newsletter.

We hope to be able to hold some social events this summer. The board will keep you posted by email on the specifics, if we feel it is safe to hold social gatherings.

Louie Gueltzow

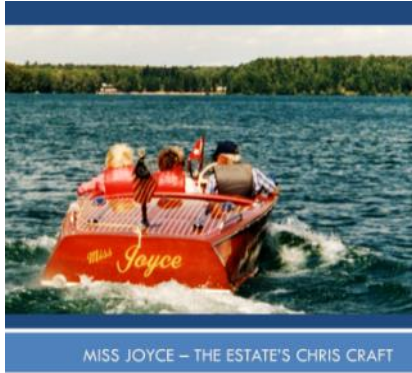
Calendar of Events

2021 Projected Calendar

- April 7 – Ice-off on chain of lakes
- April 9 – Loons return to the lake
- June 12 - Spring Social
- June 19 - Downing's Summer Solstice Event
- July 4 - Boat Parade
- July 31 - Wabana Township 100-year Anniversary
- Aug. 14 - Annual WCOLA Meeting
- Sept. 22 - Roadside Fall Clean-up



Almost Ice Out – April 3, 2021



Wabana Township 100-Year Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, July 31, 2021

If it's a rain-out on July 31, make-up day will be on Sunday, August 1, 2021

Let the party begin on **Saturday July 31, 2021** at the

Wabana Town Hall & Pavilion

Outside, there will be free hot dogs, chips, lemonade and ice cream to enjoy!

Live music!

Get your team organized for the bean bag toss tournament with a cash prizes for the top three winning teams!

Historical Displays in the Township Hall

See you there!

Wabana 100-year Anniversary Historical Committee



What You and Your Guests can do to Help Prevent the Spread of AIS

Many Itasca County local lakes and rivers now include zebra mussels, starry stonewort, or other aquatic invasive species (AIS). You can see the Itasca County infested lakes at:

<https://itascaswcd.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=fe1fee5db27640f1a03671698bd3cd0d>. Fortunately, the Wabana Chain is *NOT* one of them. WCOLA and Wabana

Township have helped fund the public-access inspection program that helps prevent AIS from spreading, but inspectors can't be at the landings 24/7. Public landings are only one entry path among many. **We all have a prevention role** ... property owners, guests, recreational boaters, anglers, visitors, and the businesses that serve us, including resorts, camps, campgrounds, lake service providers, bait shops, and marine dealers. **You and your guests can help!**

AIS are not moved by waterfowl or other wildlife. *They're moved by us.* We move AIS from one lake or river to another, via boats, trailers, bilge, live well, bait water, fishing and other water gear, docks, lifts, swim rafts, float planes, and recreational gear. Please take time to read carefully: Clean, Drain, and Dry your boats and equipment as you move from one body of water to another. Also remember to properly dispose of your extra bait as you leave each body of water. Put the bait in the trash receptacle at the landing.

Another tool to help stop the spread of AIS is a Boat Wash Station. Through your generosity and donations, WCOLA, in partnership with Wabana Township, has purchased a hot-water boat wash station that will be housed at the Wabana Township Hall.

WCOLA - WABANA TOWNSHIP

ANNOUNCING THE NEW COMMUNITY

BOAT WASH STATION

FREE FOR EVERYONE STARTING

05/27/2021

WABANA TOWN HALL - JXN OF CO. HWYS 49 & 60

SEASONAL HOURS OF OPERATION

STAFFED: THURSDAYS 12 PM - 6 PM
FRIDAYS - SUNDAYS 8 AM - 6 PM
AIS DECONTAMINATION UNIT

SELF-SERVICE: OPEN 24/7
COLD WATER SPRAY AND TOOLS FOR
REMOVAL OF AQUATIC DEBRIS

GRAND OPENING SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 2021
COMMUNITY CELEBRATION 10 AM - NOON
WABANA TOWN HALL (JXN HWYS 49 & 60)

DNR Fish Management Update- Walleye Management by Dave Weitzel- Grand Rapids Area Fisheries Supervisor

The DNR Fisheries Section is responsible for managing public fishing waters across the state. Fisheries are managed for the sake of people more so than the sake of the fish themselves. Good fisheries management must consider three important aspects; biological health and fisheries potential, social concerns and interests, and fiscal responsibility. The management process involves collecting information about the lake's habitat and fish community so that realistic fishing expectations can be developed and shared with the public. Factors that limit fishing potential are identified and management tools are prescriptively applied only when biologically, socially, and fiscally appropriate. Tools are frequently evaluated to determine success and to inform future management decisions. Walleye need specific conditions to reproduce, such conditions are lacking in many places. Stocking is a common tool used to overcome the limiting factor of poor reproduction in places with good conditions for survival. Unfortunately, stocking isn't a "silver bullet" solution to many fisheries issues so success should frequently be evaluated and strategies adjusted as new information becomes available.

Walleye have special habitat and prey requirements. They are specialist that take advantage of excellent low light eyesight and do well in waters with dark habitats (vegetate areas, deeper habitats with less light penetration, or in lakes with reduced clarity due to algae growth or turbidity). Walleye are biologically best suited for fertile, shallow lakes over 1,000 acres and mid-sized rivers. They do best in cool habitats with little competition from other predators, such as bass or pike, and in places with large populations of their favorite prey item, Yellow Perch.

Because Walleye are relatively easy to capture during spawning runs and can be successfully hatched in hatcheries, Walleye stocking has a long history in Minnesota. In the early 1900s, fry were hatched in St. Paul and distributed across the state by rail car. Most initial stockings occurred prior to any fish survey so the impact to natural fisheries is not known. It is known that Walleye stocking introduced the fish into many new waters and they became popular with anglers, especially after the 1940s. Walleye were widely stocked from the 1920s through the 1970s in an attempt to meet angler demands with little consideration to the effectiveness. Unfortunately, many of these fish were stocked into lakes with poor conditions for survival and produced marginal fishing opportunities at a relatively high fiscal cost. Walleye had become so popular, however, that the public demanded stocking with little regard to the potential for success, so the practice endured unchecked.

Overtime, the science of fisheries management has evolved and anglers have become more knowledgeable. We now know that stocking only works in places where reproduction is poor but other conditions are good for survival. Walleye are expensive to produce (fingerlings cost about a dollar each). Older fish are hard to produce and cost more, so most are stocked at young ages, usually less than one year old. They also grow slowly in northern Minnesota, taking about 4 years to reach a 14 inch "keeper" size and 5 years to spawn for the first time. This means that conditions for survival must be good, otherwise the little stocked fish will not survive long enough to benefit anglers. Poor conditions are often identified by low Yellow Perch numbers, high bass and pike numbers, small lake size and/or poor overall fertility. Lakes with these characteristics are poor candidates for Walleye management and are best suited for bass and panfish management.

Although Walleye fishing remains good, many populations across the Midwest peaked in the early 2000s and declined in recent years. Unfortunately, many lakes have become less suited for Walleye. Water clarity has increased since the passage of the clean water act in the 1970s. Although ecologically beneficial, this has resulted in less dark habitat for the fish and fewer nutrients to produce large perch populations. Warm open water periods have favored Largemouth Bass and sunfish survival, increasing competition in vegetated areas. Invasive species have disrupted food webs and forced Walleye to feed in habitats dominated by other predators. These factors have resulted in declining Walleye survival in many mid-western lakes despite frequent stocking efforts.

Wabana Lake provides a popular, multispecies fishery that naturally produces several popular fish including Northern Pike, Largemouth Bass, and Black Crappie. Walleye are naturally limited because reproduction is poor, likely do to the fact that cold, clear lakes warm too slowly for good hatching and fry survival. Walleye were uncommon in Wabana prior to the early 1980s when stocking 5-month-old “fingerling” walleye became a common practice. Walleye habitat is good in Wabana, and there have been enough perch and few enough competitors for stocked Walleye to produce a good fishery over the last three decades. The most recent survey was conducted in 2019 and found that Walleye continued to occur in average numbers for the lake and that many sizes were present with some fish living up to 15 years.

Stocking strategies on Wabana have varied, based on trial and error, knowledge and fish availability. Wabana was included in an experimental program to evaluate stocking strategies. From 2004-2019, the lake was stocked annually with a higher than typical number of fingerlings. Most lakes are stocked at a rate of one pound of fingerlings for every lake acre under 15 feet deep, every other year. Wabana received this quantity every year. These high stocking rates successfully maintained healthy Walleye numbers during the trial, but some changes may be occurring that would require an adjustment in the future. Overall, the experiment looked at lakes across Minnesota and found that increased numbers of stocked fish did not improve fishing in most cases. It turns out that a lake can only support a set number of small fish at any given time and stocking beyond that number eventually results in declined survival. The 2019 data from Wabana suggests that high predator numbers may be impacting prey availability. Yellow Perch were captured in the lowest numbers ever observed on the lake and young Walleye survival had declined from previous surveys. The 2019 survey did not target Largemouth Bass but bass numbers have increased across the state since 1970, likely due to longer growing seasons.

It is important to understand that survey catches vary dramatically so it is not prudent to draw conclusions from a single survey. More information is needed and another survey is planned for 2025. With that said, Wabana was not stocked in 2020. Due to Covid-19, fingerling availability was reduced across Minnesota and some stockings could not occur. The 2019 data suggested that Wabana Yellow Perch numbers may actually benefit from a short break from stocking so the decision was made to utilize the limited fingerling production elsewhere. DNR plans to resume fingerling stocking in 2021.

The best fisheries management occurs when people are involved. We like to hear from interested anglers. We can be reached at the Grand Rapids Area Fisheries office at 218-328-8836 or via email at grandrapids.fisheries@state.mn.us.

If you are interested in having other topics written about by Dave Weitzel, please contact me (steven.melin@juno.com) and I will contact Dave.

WCOLA 2021 Membership Listing

First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year		First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year
John and Karen	Lukens	Wabana	2029		George and Libby	Colburn	Wabana	2021
Steve and Jean	Melin	Wabana	2022		Mark and Ellen	Conover	Wabana	2021
Mark and Renae	Rasmusson	Wabana	2022		Jim and Bobbi	Corrigan	Wabana	2021
John and Cheryl	Adams	Little Wabana	2021		John and Marcia	Downing	Wabana	2021
John and Jenny	Aulick	Wabana	2021		Robert	Finlayson	Wabana	2021
Donna and David	Becchetti	Little Wabana	2021		Tannie Marsh and Steve	Fox	Wabana	2021
William J.	Bekkedahl	Bluewater	2021		Eric and Jan	Fredbeck	Wabana	2021
Craig and Cindy	Bender	Hanson Lake	2021		Dr. Peter and Chris	Friedlieb	Wabana	2021
Duane and Anne E.	Benson	Bluewater	2021		Rev. George & Lou Ellen	Gilbertson	Little Wabana	2021
Jim and Sue	Bergan	Bluewater	2021		Dorothy K.	Glascock	Wabana	2021
Elizabeth Bunge	Birch	Wabana	2021		Tom and Barb	Gleason	Wabana	2021
Joan	Birkemeyer	Wabana	2021		Greg and Diane	Gough	Bluewater	2021
Steven and Christine	Bjerke	Wabana	2021		Jim and Marcia	Gowling	Wabana	2021
Douglas	Blackmore	Wabana	2021		Don and Michele	Greiner	Bluewater	2021
Matt and Stephanie	Blade	Wabana	2021		Doug and Kathy	Griffin	Wabana	2021
Terry R. and Lynn M.	Boblit	Wabana	2021		Richard and Carol	Gross	Wabana	2021
Mary Frances and Bill	Bottoms, Jr.	Bluewater	2021		Louis and Janeen	Gueltzow	Wabana	2021
Aaron and Kelly	Britton	Trout	2021		Jessica Sedivy and Jon	Gunderson	Wabana	2021
Chris and Nancy	Bunge	Wabana	2021		Rick and Betsy Fischer	Hadley	Trout	2021
Dan and Jeanne	Burke	Wabana	2021		Dan and Jean	Hagen	Wabana	2021
Gary and Carol	Burkholder	Wabana	2021		James & Kimberly	Harms	Wabana	2021
Camp Fire MN		Bluewater	2021		Cress and Susannah	Hart	Wabana	2021
Gayle, Kirk, and Kathy	Carlson	Wabana	2021		Susan	Hawkinson		2021
Raymond and Mary	Carlson	Little Wabana	2021		Brett, Kyle, and Kari	Hedlund	Wabana	2021
Robert D. and Susan	Chalgren, Sr.	Trout	2021		Myron and Joan	Henrickson	Wabana	2021
Richard and Patricia	Chambers	Wabana	2021		Richard and Rosalie	Hesse	Wabana	2021
John F., Dennis, & Kathi	Chervinko	Trout	2021		Barry and Susan	Hines	Trout	2021
Paul and Peggy	Christians	Wabana	2021		Walt and Kim	Hoffman	Wabana	2021

WCOLA 2021 Membership Listing (con't)

First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year		First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year
Bruce and Jan	Hultgren	Wabana	2021		Paul and Kristen	McCullough	Wabana	2021
Scott and Mary	Hutter	Wabana	2021		Mary Ann	Mead	Little Trout	2021
Dave	Johnson	Wabana	2021		Steven and Pat	Mead	Little Trout	2021
Mark and Anne	Johnson	Wabana	2021		John and Carolyn	Merkel	Trout	2021
Jeff and Linda	Jorgenson	Wabana	2021		Arthur L.	Merrill	Wabana	2021
Rex and Melanie	Kastner	Trout	2021		Loree and Matthew	Miltich	Wabana Township	2021
Andrew Harrington and Erik	Kaukis	Bluewater	2021		Mark	Miner	Wabana WEBSITE	2021
Richard and Jeanne	Koeckeritz	Bluewater	2021		Keith and Jane	Moore	Wabana	2021
David and Stefanie	Koewler	Wabana	2021		Robert and Kay	Moore	Wabana	2021
Dennis and Jean	Koewler	Wabana	2021		Tom and Lori	Moore	Wabana	2021
John and Sheila	Koewler	Wabana	2021		Lynn and Tim	Moratzka	Trout	2021
Robert and Wendy	Koewler	Wabana	2021		Carl and Sue	Nordgren	Bluewater	2021
Ken and Deb	Kruger	Wabana	2021		David and Carolyn	Nyren	Wabana	2021
Danielle	Larsen	Wabana	2021		Paul and Barb	Oberg	Wabana	2021
Bruce and Bonnie	Larson	Bluewater	2021		Gary and Kim	Oja	Wabana	2021
Jerald E. and Emma J.	Larson	Wabana	2021		Jim and Gail	Olijnek	Wabana	2021
Juan and Christina	Lazo	Wabana	2021		Marvin and Sandie	Oman		2021
Dave and Sue	Lick	Wabana	2021		Marvin and Mary	Ott		2021
Arnie and Julie	Linder	Wabana	2021		Sharon	Owen	Wabana	2021
Michael and Annette	Linder	Wabana	2021		Tim and Jean	Panchyshyn	Wabana	2021
Roger and Nancy	Linder	Wabana	2021		Glenn and Elaine	Pearson	Wabana	2021
William H. and Kathryn	Linder	Bluewater	2021		Nola	Pierce	Wabana	2021
Patrick and Jackie	Loney	Wabana	2021		Deb and Jeff	Powers	Bluewater	2021
Thompson, Linden, Odell	Loney Family	Wabana	2021		Ron and Anne	Radecki	Wabana	2021
Brian and Pamela	Lund	Wabana	2021		Steven and Traci	Ribar	Wabana	2021
Evelyn	Maddaus	Wabana	2021		James and Susan	Ries	Bluewater	2021
Peg Landin and Tim	Mangni	Bluewater	2021		JoEllyn Moore and Andrew	Roalstad	Wabana	2021
Robert	Manning	Wabana Bluewater	2021		Ron	Roalstad	Wabana	2021
James and Jane	McCullough	Wabana	2021		Catherine	Rudolph	Wabana	2021
Mark and Kathy	McCullough	Wabana	2021		Bill	Rutherford	Bluewater	2021

WCOLA 2021 Membership Listing (con't)

First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year	First Name	Last Name	Lake	Year
				Swanny	Voneida	Bluewater	2021
William and Shirley	Sage	Bluewater	2021	Kelley and Sally	WheeLeEr	Trout	2021
Richard Brasch and Carole	Schmidt	Wabana	2021	Pamela Wassberg	Whittenbury	Little Trout	2021
William and Sue	Simmons	Bluewater	2021	Amy Luke and Jeff	Wick	Wabana	2021
Dara Wolf and Doug	Skelton	Trout	2021	Mike Murphy and Ellen	Widmark	Wabana	2021
Gordon and Gerri	Slabaugh	Bluewater	2021	Sally and George	Wilbur	Wabana	2021
Bruce and Diane	Smith	Bluewater	2021	Gib and Kathleen	Willson	Wabana	2021
James and Heather	Sodomka	Little Trout	2021	Gig and Kristen	Willson	Wabana	2021
John	Soll	Wabana	2021	William J. and Donna M.	Wolf, Jr.	Trout	2021
Wayne and Carol	Speedling	Clearwater	2021	Jeff and Lorrie	Yeschick	Wabana	2021
Jan	Stein	Wabana	2021	Al Schultz and Mary	Ziegler	Little Wabana	2021
Kim Wickland and Rob	Striegl	Wabana	2021	Brian and Lauren	Zimmer	Wabana	2021
Kurt and Lavonne	Thompson	Bluewater	2021	Mark and Lindsey	Zimmer	Wabana	2021
Matthew & Nicole Stecklein and Greg & Mary	Till	Wabana	2021	Ken and Barbara	Zimmer, Jr.	Wabana	2021
John and Mary	Uradnik	Wabana	2021	Mark W. and Alexandra	Zimmerman	Trout	2021
Betty and Gregg	Vandesteeg	Wabana	2021	John and Alida	Zimmerman, Jr.	Trout	2021
Jack	Velzen	Wabana	2021	148 Members			

October 2021 Newsletter – Editor’s Request

For the October newsletter, we would like member inputs. Your photos and stories about the times you have enjoyed in, on, and around these beautiful lakes during this upcoming summer. We have had plenty of articles on AIS, Water Quality, Shoreline practices, and other informative pieces. So, for the next edition we are asking you to help us with some fun content.

Please send via email to steven.melin@juno.com – Thank you



**THE CHAIN LETTER OF THE
WABANA CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION**

Jean Koewler, Treasurer
32040 Wakeman Bay Trail
Grand Rapids, MN 55744