

The Sugarloaf Interpreter

A Publication Of The
Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association

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218-733-9938



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Duluth, MN 55802

Wetland Restoration Project

At the May meeting of the SICA Board of Directors, Pat Collins from the DNR reported on the status of the Sugarloaf Cove Wetland Restoration Project.

Thanks to a grant from the Great Lakes National Program Office of the Environmental Protection Agency, an investigation into the location and historic plant communities of filled wetlands at Sugarloaf Cove is underway.

Eighteen four-inch diameter borings were drilled in the tombolo, an area where wetlands are suspected to have existed before the site was developed by Consolidated Papers, Inc. Six of the borings encountered a notable layer of organic silt (swamp deposit) or peat. These swamp deposits were generally covered with one to three feet of sand and gravel.

Samples from these borings were taken to the Archaeometry Lab at UMD, where pollen, seeds, and plant material were identified and the relative proportions of organic versus inorganic material were determined. The early results of this investigation suggest that the area was a forested or shrub wetland rather than bog or open water.

The next step in the project will be a meeting of DNR and SICA board members to determine the planning procedure for wetlands restoration. Such a plan would include a map of the area to be restored, a desired plant community, and methods for restoration.

Executive Director Selected

On April 15, 1998, Terri Port assumed the duties of Executive Director of SICA. She comes highly qualified by both education and experience. She holds a Ph.D. in environmental management from the University of California Irvine. She has served as both Senior Director and Staff Vice President of Environmental Health and Safety at Continental Airlines; as Senior Project Manager for environmental projects at IT Corporation; and as Director, Hazardous and Industrial Waste Management, for the Minnesota Waste Management Board.

A native of Cloquet, Terri and her husband Al (a Duluth native) spent 15 years away from Minnesota, working for large corporations in Los Angeles and Houston. Terri says they both missed Minnesota so much that vacation time always found them in the Boundary Waters or on Isle Royale. They finally returned to Minnesota so their two sons, Bobby and Andy, could grow up enjoying the outdoors. Terri took on the position with SICA because she hopes to "give something back to the State of Minnesota." Welcome Terri!

New Treasurer for SICA

At the May 16 SICA board meeting, Gregory D. Koschinska, CPA, was elected to fill the position of SICA treasurer, which will be vacated by Elmer L. Andersen on July 1. Koschinska is a partner in an accounting and consulting firm in Minneapolis. He is a distinguished member of his professional discipline and is active in a variety of community organizations.

President's Column

by B.J. Smith Kohlstedt

The most exciting event of the spring is the filling of the Executive Director position. We are delighted to welcome Terri Port, who will coordinate committee work, do fundraising and publicity, and generally help promote the word and work of Sugarloaf. Members can contact Terri at the office with questions, comments, and suggestions.

The change from volunteer leadership to a full-time staff person reflects success and maturity in the association. It means we are accomplishing our goals with enough credibility to deserve (and afford) a professional leader. This lends more efficiency to achieving more goals. It builds upon itself like the chicken and the egg. In short, SICA has just laid its first egg. (Or maybe we just grew our first chicken, I'm not sure.)

With the coming of summer, we look forward to more people visiting the Sugarloaf site. The interpretive trail will be finished, with trail guides and brochures already available in the parking lot. Research has been completed for the proposed DNR wetland restoration project (you'll notice a few trampled alders). The cinderblock garage (on DNR property) will be razed this summer, and the old Consolidated Paper office building (on SICA property) will be assessed for future shelter or program uses.



Please plan to attend the annual business meeting on Saturday, August 22, 7 p.m. at the Schroeder Town Hall. It will start with a lively presentation, "History of the North Shore," followed by committee updates. If you are interested in serving on the board or nominating someone else—now is the time to call Terri with the news.

May 16 Board Meeting

The SICA Board of Directors met at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, on Saturday, May 16, for the Spring Quarter meeting. A number of significant decisions were made.

- A kayak campsite cannot be allowed at Sugarloaf Cove or anywhere on SICA property because the Conservation Easement prohibits all camping.
- A photo contest will be developed as part of a membership campaign. Kim Johnson (Chair of the Development Committee) and Terri Port (Executive Director) will work out the details. It was suggested that the winning photos be used to create a calendar with a different picture of Sugarloaf Cove for each month.
- Terms will soon expire for nearly one-third of the Board of Directors, and new board members will be elected at the annual meeting in August. Anyone who is interested in serving on the board should contact Terri Port as soon as possible (218-733-9938).
- Wolf Ridge has requested funds from the Andersen Foundation to build a new classroom and interpretive display, to be named the "Sugarloaf Suite." The board decided that SICA would support the interpretive component associated with this room as well as a programmatic partnership with Wolf Ridge.
- LCMR II, Native American Oral History Project, will begin this summer. A revised work program has been submitted to the LCMR, and a review of progress will take place in June.
- LCMR III, Site Management Plan Proposal, has made the first cut at the LCMR. A hearing on the proposal will take place in Grand Rapids on July 9th.
- Merlin Berg requested that the board return to the policy of submitting newsletter material within 5 days after board meetings. Merlin also announced that he will be retiring as newsletter editor and asked for a replacement.



Celebrate at Sugarloaf Cove!

On Sunday, July 19, people will gather in parks and communities throughout the entire Lake Superior basin to share a day of celebration for Lake Superior.

This year, for the first time, Sugarloaf Cove will be part of Minnesota's Lake Superior Day activities. Celebrations will also take place at provincial parks, state parks, and national parks in Ontario, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Started in 1991 by the Lake Superior Program Office in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Lake Superior Day is a time to celebrate the fact that we live beside the most beautiful lake in the world. It is a day to celebrate clean water and to remind ourselves that Lake Superior is perhaps the most important resource we have.

Not only is Lake Superior the largest of the Great Lakes, it is the largest freshwater lake in the entire world, based on surface area. It covers more than 31,000 square miles, about equivalent to the combined area of the states of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, and New Hampshire.

If measured by volume, Superior is the world's second largest freshwater lake, surpassed only by Lake Baikal in Siberia. It is estimated that Lake Superior contains approximately three quadrillion gallons of water. That's 10% of all the fresh surface water in the world.

Lake Superior is the deepest, cleanest, clearest, and coldest of the Great Lakes. The average depth is 489 feet. The deepest point in the lake was previously believed to be 1,333 feet, but new measurements have revealed that the lake bottom drops to a depth of 1,402 feet south of Thunder Bay.

Because the lake has low levels of nutrients, suspended sediments, and organic material, the water is so clear that you can often see 50 to 75 feet below the water surface.

Because of its immense size, Lake Superior influences local weather, moderating the highs and lows of the temperature near the shore. This huge body of water

has an average annual temperature of 40°F. The water is usually warmest in August, and even then, the average temperature is only 58°F.

Superior's watershed is relatively small for the size of the lake ... only 49,300 square miles. In comparison, the Mississippi River drains an area of 1.2 million square miles. An average of 75,000

cubic feet of water per second flows from Lake Superior into Lake Huron.

Approximately 600,000 people live within the basin in the United States and approximately 150,000 in Canada.

According to the "1995 State of the Great Lakes Report" the environmental quality of Lake Superior is good compared to the other Great Lakes. Biodiversity remains higher and toxic pollution is lower than in the rest of the Great Lakes. This is primarily because of the relatively small human populations and limited industry around Lake Superior.

Lake Superior Day is a time to remember that we must work together to maintain the superior water quality and beauty of this most Superior Great Lake.

Join us at Sugarloaf Cove on Sunday July 19 to share in a celebration of Lake Superior Day!

Celebrate Lake Superior Day at Sugarloaf Cove! Sunday July 19

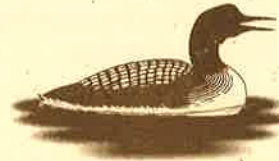
We'll have a site open house from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Walk the interpretive trail and enjoy the beauty of Lake Superior. Cascade Kayaks from Grand Marais will have demonstration kayaks available for paddling. A fishboil and picnic will begin at noon and end when food is gone.

Please call the SICA office at 218-733-9938 by Monday July 6 to make a food reservation, so we have an idea of how much food to prepare. A \$3.00 donation for food will be collected at the site.

Turning the Feather Around

George Morrison's new book, *Turning the Feather Around: My Life in Art*, published in May by the Minnesota Historical Society Press, is no ordinary account of an artist's life. The artist is a Grand Portage native who became a prominent figure in the Abstract Expressionist movement in post-war New York. St. Paul writer Margot Fortunato Galt interviewed the renowned Ojibwe artist on more than 30 occasions over the course of three years. The resulting book unfolds its story in Morrison's own conversational voice, adding the voice of Morrison's former wife Hazel Belvo when she entered his life in the early 1960s.

Book review from the Minnesota Historical Society



Community Park Proposed For Grand Marais

A proposal to establish a community park was recently launched at Grand Marais. The park would encompass 19 acres surrounding the Community Center, would include the Cook County School and Arrowhead Arts Complex, and would extend to the Pincushion and Superior Hiking Trail systems. It would provide youth and families with gathering places for leisure activities.

Cook County, the City of Grand Marais, and Independent School District #166 have already worked together with volunteers and school classes to start this project by building three tennis courts, outdoor basketball/hockey facilities, and a sand volleyball court. A DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant with matching funds from Cook County has provided for upgrading the Little League ballfield, adding a picnic shelter, and building a preschool playground. For further information contact Diane Booth at the Community Center.

Freshwater Learning Center

The North House Folk School, established in 1997, has created a Freshwater Learning Center on the harbor in Grand Marais. Supplemented by existing programs now being offered by North House, it will provide a wealth of educational experiences, will accentuate the cultural history of the community, and will provide research opportunities for MN DNR, the USFWS, and UM. The Center will be housed ultimately in the Eckel fish house property recently acquired by the Folk School. This will also provide a permanent home for the *Hjordis*, the 50-foot sailing schooner acquired by North House in 1997. The school curriculum for 1998 includes a variety of lake-related and craft courses as well as courses on board the *Hjordis*. For information, write to North House Folk School, P.O. Box 759, Grand Marais, MN 55612.

Calendar

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|-------------------|--|
| June 27 | John Schroeder Days in Schroeder. Spaghetti dinner, 5-7 p.m. |
| June 30 | Ft. Snelling State Park. Dedication of Thomas C. Savage Visitor Center, 1 p.m. |
| July 7 | Wolf Ridge ELC. World Population presentation, 6:30-8:30 p.m. |
| July 19 | Lake Superior Day at Sugarloaf Cove. Open house at the Cove, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Activities include demo kayaks and a fishboil that starts at noon. |
| July 30 | Fisherman's Picnic, Grand Marais. |
| August 7/8 | Friends of Grand Portage annual meeting. Indian Rendezvous. Grand Portage. |
| August 22 | SICA annual membership meeting. Schroeder Town Hall, 7 p.m. |

The Demise of the *Amboy*

summary by Merlin Berg

Julius E. Wolff, Jr.'s book, *Lake Superior Shipwrecks*, includes a graphic description of the ill-fated final voyage of the 893-ton schooner-barge *Amboy* and her foundering near Sugarloaf Cove.

A violent storm erupted on the evening of November 27, 1905, in western Lake Superior, including the Canadian lakehead, and continued for 12 hours. Winds increased from 44 mph to as high as 79 mph. Snow "cascaded down," and communications were badly disrupted. Duluth weathercaster H. W. Richardson could "no longer get data on the magnitude of the storm mass." Train and streetcar traffic was halted throughout the Upper Midwest, fallen telephone and telegraph poles blocked streets and roads, and in Duluth, low-lying areas adjacent to Lake Superior were flooded.

Conditions for sailors on Lake Superior were worse than on land. Visibility was cut to zero by the heavy snow, and the waves "seemed to run higher than pilot houses or smokestacks."

The storm became known as the "*Mataffa* Blow" because of the sinking of the major steel carrier, the *Mataffa*, at a Duluth pier. After several days it was learned that eighteen ships had been disabled or destroyed, one ship had foundered "with all hands," and several more had experienced various degrees of damage. Most of the vessels were damaged west of Keweenaw Point.

The 231-foot, 1360-ton wooden steamer *George Spencer* and her schooner-barge, the *Amboy*, became lost in the storm. The officers knew they were near the North Shore "as the compass was spinning wildly." With only a 265-horsepower engine, they couldn't bear away from the shore, and both vessels were grounded on a gravel beach, which was the only such

landing for miles. The site is approximately at highway mile 72.2, below a privately-owned home. This is the location of the former village of Thomasville.

Local fishermen and lumberjacks were attracted by the distress whistle and hastened to the double wreck. The officers of the vessels knew they could not long withstand the pounding of the surf and ordered lines and planks thrown overboard toward shore. The people on shore waded into the freezing waters and made the lines fast to trees. The *Amboy* watchman, James Gibson, "came hand-over-hand across 50 yards of boiling lake" and instructed the fishermen in creating a breeches buoy. With this device, 22 more men and one woman were removed from the vessels. Schroeder resident Marion McKeever relates that her father, Herman Mickelsen, and Oly Reinertsen helped get the people off the boats. The crews were taken to local homes and the Slatt Brothers logging camp to warm, feed, and revive them. Not a life was lost!

The next day a tug arrived from Duluth and picked up the crews. Marine surveyors concluded that the *Amboy* had made her last run, while the *George Spencer* would be renovated after her cargo of coal was removed. Whitney Brothers retrieved her cargo, and she sailed for several more years. The *Amboy* was a \$10,000 loss; the *George Spencer* a \$30,000 salvage and rebuilding operation.



Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association
31 West Superior Street, Suite 401
Duluth, MN 55802

SICA Board of Directors

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SICA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association in the category I have indicated. SICA is an educational, nonprofit, 501(c)3 Minnesota Corporation.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____
 e-mail: _____

Memberships are annual and expire on December 31.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 5 Student/Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 40 Supporting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100 Sustaining |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 500 Patron |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Library/School | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Benefactor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Renewing Member |

Please make checks payable to Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association, and mail to SICA at 31 West Superior St., #401, Duluth, MN 55802.

Thank you!