



# Interpreter

A Publication of The Sugarloaf  
 Interpretive Center Association  
 31 W. Superior Street, Suite 401  
 Duluth, MN 55802 218-733-9938

## The Dream

**Sugarloaf Cove...it calls up special memories for each of us.** Can you visualize those defining moments in your relationship with Sugarloaf?

Perhaps it is the memory of the solitude and peace that entered your soul the first time you sat and gazed at the lake. Or is it the day you watched snow falling thick on the pines as you passed silently on snowshoes? The smooth feel of a pebble in your hand, or the happy smile on your daughter's face when she skipped her first stone across the calm water of the Cove? Perhaps it is the exhilaration of a shared ride in a voyageur canoe that you remember best. Is it the flash of success in a student's eye when he finally "got it" or the taste of fresh fish, hot from the kettle, that calls you back?

Some of my defining moments at Sugarloaf Cove include

*... **Wandering through the pine plantations,** thrashing through alder stands, bursting onto a view of the lake, and marveling at the rabbit damage as we imagined the route of the proposed interpretive trail one snowy/rainy spring day, culminating with a funny snapshot (thanks BJ) of my husband and me admiring the lake, looking dreary in our raincoats, but pleased to be out with a group of such wonderful folk.*

*... **The look on the face of the kids** when that egg finally shattered under the weight of three children during a program we held in the old green house, after we'd given in to the cold and wind, and braved the bat guano and dirt on the steps to reach the upper floor.*

*... **A day of sun and calm** when I stopped by the Cove on a whim and felt I was the only person on the entire North Shore, watching a solitary cloud drift across the sky, finding a lucky pebble that would ensure that nobody noticed I was late getting back to work.*

*... **Testifying to the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources** about the value of our proposed site inventory and then meetings,*

*meetings, meetings with people who were willing to work toward accomplishing the goals we had set.*

For each of us, those defining moments, those flashes of memory, those dreams for and about Sugarloaf Cove are different, but they connect us in spiritual and special ways. Late last fall when I was talking with Elmer Andersen, he reminisced about the vision we had for protecting Sugarloaf Cove and for creating an association when we first came together more than eight years ago. We've come a long way since then, and we still have much to dream.

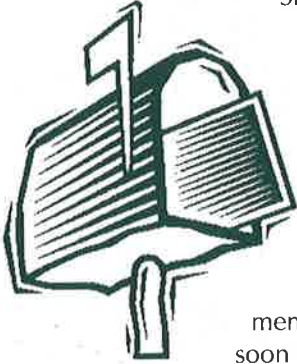
I'm sure there are some common themes among all our dreams, but I'm sure there are differences, as well. As I begin my term as President, I want SICA to value and benefit from all our dreams - the Board of Directors and other members, North Shore residents and frequent Sugarloaf visitors, as well as those of you who've only been lucky enough to experience the Cove once. I believe SICA's strength lies in our shared vision, but also in the differences that will help us build a strong program and association that will be true to our mission of preserving and protecting Sugarloaf Cove and creating a center from which we can all learn a greater understanding of our role in the ecosystem of the North Shore.

It's those defining moments that give us each a reason to support SICA and choose to protect and enjoy Sugarloaf Cove. Make time in the next year to visit the Cove and create some new memories. Find peace alone or share the sunrise with a friend. Walk the interpretive trail, skip a rock, imagine the past. Find some new reasons to support the work of SICA and then join in. You may want to donate your time, give a gift membership, or make a monetary contribution that will be matched by a generous corporate sponsor to help us accomplish our mission. Whatever you choose, be sure to share your dream and vision of what we might become.

SICA's VISION is a healthy Minnesota North Shore of Lake Superior where an informed citizenry takes personal and group responsibility to ensure that natural and ecological systems and human economic and social systems coexist in a fashion sustainable into the future.

# Membership Campaign

Have you noticed a flurry of mail and phone calls recently, asking you to renew your SICA membership? We hope so!



SICA Executive Director Terri Port and Intern Jill Hiemenz have been busy contacting all 400+ people on the SICA membership list to remind them it's time to renew their membership. So far in 2000, about 100 people have renewed, and for all those renewals, WE THANK YOU! It is through your continuing contributions that we know SICA's message is being heard. If you haven't renewed your membership yet, please consider doing so as soon as you can. We need your ongoing support.

When thinking about whether to renew your membership, consider the following:

SICA was formed in 1992 to preserve Sugarloaf Cove and prevent a safe harbor and marina from being built at the Cove. Many folks joined in the early 1990s to demonstrate support for private ownership of the land, so that it could be preserved, restored, and used for interpretive programs.

Today—eight years later—we have succeeded in acquiring title to the land at Sugarloaf Cove, but we are still in the infant stages of restoration and interpretation.

The next decade at Sugarloaf Cove will see major advances in restoring native plant communities at the site, but this involves a lot more than just a one-time planting effort.

Restoration will require ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and additional planting. We'll also be developing spur trails around restored areas, installing interpretive signs, creating interpretive and educational brochures about land restoration, and providing interpretive programs that will help others learn to carry out their own restoration projects.

In 1992 the people who formed SICA were so bold as to think a non-profit organization could succeed at preservation. Well, they were right! We've succeeded at preserving the land. Now we must carry the mission forward into the next stages of restoration and interpretation, and we need your support.

In addition to renewing your own membership, tell us if you know of anyone else interested in joining SICA. Any friend who joins at or above the \$50 level will receive a free calendar, and so will you! Just give us the referral, and we'll take it from there. Many times we forget that our friends are our friends because they share many of the same values and interests we do. Take this opportunity to tell them the story of Sugarloaf Cove and encourage them to join a group dedicated to preserving this wonderful site on the North Shore.

We exist to serve you...but we need your support to exist. If you have any questions, call or e-mail our Executive Director, Terri Port Wright, at 218-733-9938 or [tport@duluth.infi.net](mailto:tport@duluth.infi.net).

## Sugarloaf Updates

If you have provided your e-mail address to us but you're not receiving our news updates, please send an e-mail message to [tport@duluth.infi.net](mailto:tport@duluth.infi.net) and we'll try again. Executive Director Terri Port says "must be my eyes are getting older, because I have tried some of the addresses folks have sent in and they get

rejected." So please try again, and we'll get you added to the list. If you've never sent us your e-mail address, do so any time, and you'll receive late-breaking news, invitations to hikes and programs, updates about SICA, and information about North Shore issues.

*"THE LONGER I LIVE THE MORE MY MIND DWELLS UPON THE BEAUTY AND THE WONDER OF THE WORLD ... I HAVE LOVED THE FEEL OF THE GRASS UNDER MY FEET, AND THE SOUND OF THE RUNNING STREAMS BY MY SIDE. THE HUM OF THE WIND IN THE TREETOPS HAS ALWAYS BEEN GOOD MUSIC TO ME, AND THE FACE OF THE FIELDS HAS OFTEN COMFORTED ME MORE THAN THE FACES OF MEN. I AM IN LOVE WITH THIS WORLD."*

*—John Burroughs*



# Cove



Nancy Nelson

*"Ahhh...Minnesota beauty!"*

Malizia family of Banks, Oregon

*"Beautiful job on the trails."*

Laura Shrout and family  
Palatine, Illinois

*"As always, I am refreshed and restored by my visit to the Cove. Perhaps it is the quiet sense of timelessness ... the feeling that no matter what we humans do, the rocks and the water—and life itself—will endure."*

Charlotte  
Duluth, Minnesota

## SICA People

SICA Board member **Howard Olson** recently received the prestigious Reuel Harmon Award in recognition of his many years of dedicated service to the Minnesota Parks and Trails Council. Howard has been a member of the Parks and Trails Council Board for 12 years and has served on numerous committees and has acted as Chairman of the Board, President, and Vice President.

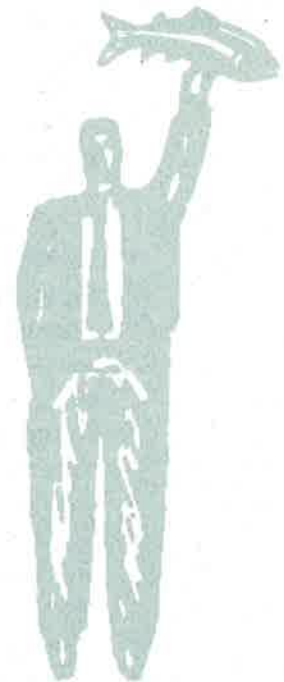
The Reuel Harmon award was established six years ago to recognize the great contributions Harmon made to the Council during his lifetime and the nearly 3 million dollars he bequeathed the Council. Previous recipients of the award include Martin Kellogg, Sam Morgan, Elmer L. Andersen, Nadine Blacklock, and Willard Munger.

Howard said "I am truly delighted to have been chosen to receive this award. I'm not accustomed to being recognized in this manner. An added pleasure is that it will be presented to me by my friend, and most active environmentalist, Malcolm McDonald."



## New Board Member

Welcome to new SICA Board member, **Jack Pichotta!** Jack is the Executive Director of the Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center in Finland, Minnesota. Jack began his career as a high school social studies teacher in Cloquet. In 1970, out of his concern for the future of the planet, Jack organized an Earth Day celebration for the high school in which a full week of regular classes was replaced with environmental topics taught by more than 100 specialists from all over the nation. Shortly after that he was instrumental in creating the Environmental Learning Center, which was originally located near Isabella and moved to Wolf Ridge about 12 years ago. Jack lives in Finland with his wife Genea. Jack has been the chief cook at the first two SICA 'Celebrate Lake Superior Day' fishboils, and he'll be cooking for the fishboil again this year.



## Grading

During the excavation stage of the project, approximately 145 truck loads of fill were gently removed to expose the organic (peat) soils that are believed to represent the land surface before the area was filled. The fill material that was removed was placed in the old roadway, bringing the road up to the grade of the surrounding landscape in an effort to disperse runoff and reduce sedimentation and erosion. Alder removed from the excavation area was chipped and used for cover on the filled roadbed.

## Fall Seeding

During late summer and early fall, representatives of Booming Native Plants scoured the area around Sugarloaf Cove for sources of native plant seeds. Seeds were collected from native plants such as mountain ash, white cedar, rose, aster, fireweed, Joe-pye weed, wild iris, goldenrod, bulrushes, and sedges. In October, these seeds were planted throughout the restoration project site. They also located larger specimens of native trees and shrubs, which, with the permission of landowners, will be transplanted to Sugarloaf Cove this spring.

During the winter, Booming Native Plants has been propagating thousands of seedlings for spring plug planting. Organic soil collected from the site is also being nurtured in the greenhouse in order to observe the species that may grow voluntarily on the site.

## Spring Seeding

Spring will be a busy time for the wetland restoration project. The seedlings generated in the greenhouse during the winter and the larger woody plant species to be dug and transplanted will be moved into the restoration area in May (Figure 5). Additional seeds will be harvested

## Proposed Planting Plan Concept

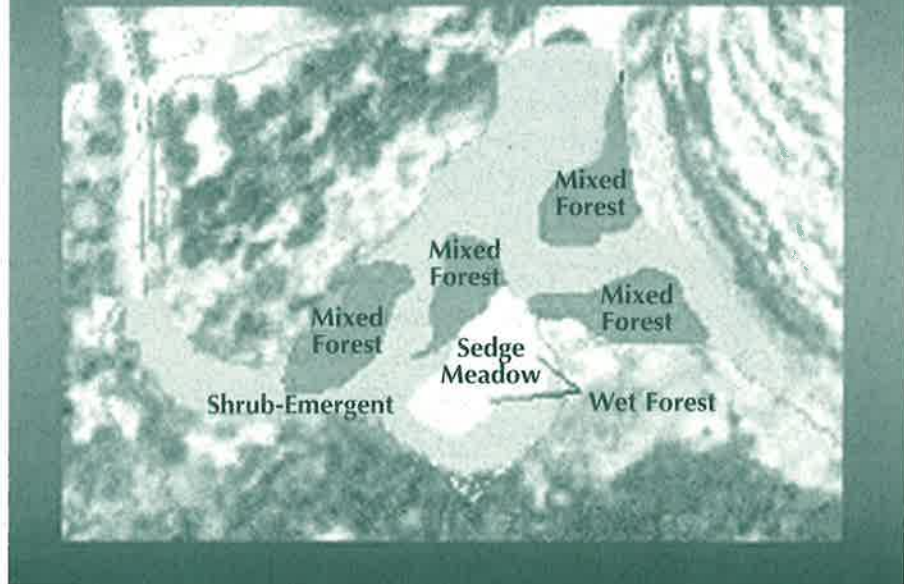


Figure 5 - Draft seeding plan.

from spring blooming species that were not available last fall.

After the seeding is completed, it will be up to "Mother Nature" to take control. A great variety of species will have been planted in abundant quantities to begin the restoration process. Then we must give the area time for the energy of the system to determine its fate.

## Volunteer Days

Everyone is encouraged to come to Sugarloaf Cove to help or observe the spring planting activities. We have designated Friday May 19, Saturday May 20, and Sunday May 21 as planting days—rain or shine. Bring water to drink and a picnic lunch. If you are going to help with planting, remember to bring your work boots,

gardening gloves, and bug spray. If possible, bring a shovel and a bucket for watering plants. Come between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. and share any amount of time that you can. Please contact Terri Port Wright for more information or to volunteer for planting (218-733-9938, [tport@duluth.infi.net](mailto:tport@duluth.infi.net)).

### Sugarloaf Cove Planting Days

**HELP US PLANT SEEDLINGS!**

**Saturday May 20 and Sunday May 21  
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

**RAIN or SHINE**

**TO VOLUNTEER:**

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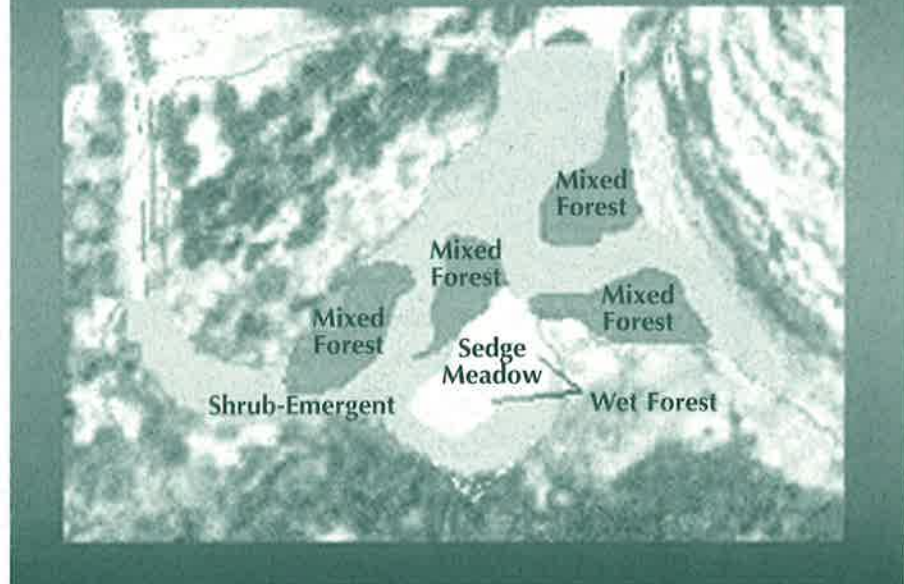


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## Monthly Hikes

Don't forget! SICA is now sponsoring interpretive hikes at Sugarloaf Cove on the second Saturday of every month, beginning at 10:00 am. All hikes are free and open to the public. A different interpretive topic is covered each month, so come as often as you can. Topics covered so far include:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| NOVEMBER: | <i>Geology of Sugarloaf Cove</i>  |
| DECEMBER: | <i>Winter Photography</i>   |
| JANUARY:  | <i>Winter Birds</i>   |
| FEBRUARY: | <i>Learning to Snowshoe</i>   |
| MARCH:    | <i>Who Lives At Sugarloaf Cove?</i><br><i>Finding animal tracks and trails.</i> |

Future topics will include the trees and shrubs of Sugarloaf Cove, identifying native plants, the historical uses of Sugarloaf Cove, and



many others. Watch your local newspaper or your e-mail for details. If you have topics to suggest, contact Terri Port Wright at [tport@duluth.infi.net](mailto:tport@duluth.infi.net).

In addition, you can arrange for special interpretive programs. If your group would like a personalized tour of Sugarloaf Cove, just let us know. We'll be happy to accommodate your needs.

## Missing Maples



Maple trees are an important component of our northern forest. Tapping maple trees for syrup has long been a traditional spring activity for the Ojibwe people of northern Minnesota. And if you think of the North Shore of Lake Superior in September, you'll probably picture the ridges ablaze with the rich yellow of the sugar maple and the unbelievably intense scarlet of the red maple.

Maples are abundant in the highlands along the North Shore of Lake Superior, but there are no maple trees growing at Sugarloaf Cove. Have they been removed? Or were they never there? Chel Anderson, of the DNR County Biological Survey, says it is unlikely that maples were ever common at Sugarloaf Cove. Why not? Because the distinctive conditions of the maples' North Shore Highlands habitat does not occur at the Cove.

Maples like to grow in rich, loamy soil. Along the bedrock ridges of the North Shore Highlands, the soils are relatively deep and loamy, and in many areas a layer of clay (or other material) beneath the loam helps to keep the soils moist. Closer to the lakeshore, in places like Sugarloaf Cove, the soil is very thin and is either too well-drained or too clay-rich to suit the maples.

In addition, maples are not as well-adapted to cold as some tree species, and here in northeastern Minnesota they are living at the northern edge of their range. Their roots are sensitive to freezing, so the extra thick blanket of 'lake effect' snow in the highlands helps to protect the roots from frost damage.

But even more importantly—the maple trees flower early in the spring before their leaves emerge. A late frost can ruin the flowers and eliminate seed production for the year. Because the highlands of the North Shore lie within the climatic influence of Lake Superior, temperatures are moderated, making late spring frosts less likely so the maple flowers are usually safe. In addition, the topography of the steep slopes helps to "shed" cold air. The denser cold air sinks down into the valleys, where maples are seldom found.

Maples provide us with a good example of how every tree species needs a unique combination of soil, moisture, and temperature. Even though Sugarloaf Cove's location on the shore of Lake Superior might provide enough frost protection for the maples, the soil isn't suitable. If a maple tried to grow here, it would have a very hard time competing with the birch, aspen, and spruce trees that are much better-adapted to the specific conditions at Sugarloaf Cove.



## SICA ACTIVITIES

APRIL 8

**10 a.m. Interpretive Hike.** Hike the trail at Sugarloaf Cove and learn about the history of Consolidated Papers, Inc.

MAY 13

**10 a.m. Interpretive Hike.** Discover spring wildflowers while hiking the trail at Sugarloaf Cove.

MAY 19, 20, 21

**8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Planting Days at Sugarloaf Cove.** Help us plant over 20,000 seedlings as part of the Sugarloaf Restoration Project. For more information, contact Terri Port Wright at 218-733-9938 or tport@duluth.infi.net

MAY 20

**Noon. SICA Board of Directors meets** at Sugarloaf Cove (bring lunch).

JUNE 3

**10 a.m. National Trails Day hike at Sugarloaf Cove.** Free t-shirts provided by the American Hiking Society.

JUNE 10

**10 a.m. Interpretive Hike.** Look for migrating warblers and other birds at Sugarloaf Cove.

JUNE 24

**10 a.m. Interpretive Program.** Wild Weather: a mini-lesson in weather with intern Kate Anders.

JULY 8

**10 a.m. Interpretive Hike.** Learn about the rich variety of lichens that grow at Sugarloaf Cove.

JULY 16

**11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Third Annual "Celebrate Lake Superior" Day fishboil** at Sugarloaf Cove. Join us for fresh Lake Superior Herring. Cost is \$5.00 per meal.

JULY 22

**10 a.m. Interpretive Program.** Growing Agates: join intern Kate Anders for a day at Sugarloaf Cove searching for and learning about agates.

AUGUST 12

**10 a.m. Interpretive Hike.** Learn about the trees and shrubs that make up the forest at Sugarloaf Cove.

AUGUST 19

**SICA Annual Membership Meeting, Grand Opening of the Visitor's Center,** and reunion of the folks who worked and lived at Sugarloaf Landing! Watch for details in our next newsletter.

AUGUST 26

**10 a.m. Interpretive Program.** Steps Toward Nature: a program on 'green' living with intern Kate Anders.

**(All activities are RAIN or SHINE.)**

## More Programs!

SICA will have help this summer from intern Kate Anders, a junior at Carleton College, majoring in geology and environmental studies. She will lead interpretive programs at Sugarloaf Cove on the fourth Saturday in June, July, and August. She will also be developing a 5th grade curriculum that integrates geology and environmental studies. The course will be presented as a week-long daycamp starting August 14.



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

## SICA OFFICERS

Founding Director

**Elmer L. Andersen**

President

**Barb Liukkonen**

Vice President

**Art Fenstad**

Secretary

**Pat Maus**

Treasurer

**Howard Olson**

Executive Director

**Terri Port Wright**

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# membership APPLICATION

Please enroll me as a member of the Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association in the category I have indicated.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- \$ 25 Contributing  
 \$ 50 Supporting  
 \$ 100 Sustaining  
 \$ 500 Patron  
 \$ 1000 Benefactor  
 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other

New     Renew

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

THANK YOU!