

Interpreter

A Publication of The Sugarloaf
Interpretive Center Association
244 Marks Road, Esko, MN 55733
218-879-4334

"Reflections"

B.J. Smith Kohlstedt

Being an emotional type, I walked away from the last SICA board meeting without much more than a casual "See ya later." My term on the board was up, and I had not run for re-election. My eyes stung a bit as I walked up the hill, taking in the lake, the cove, the pines, my friends still bustling around the log building, and I reflected upon the events of my six years as a board member. What a time.

When we first heard about the "Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association," my husband John and I joined as charter members; it seemed like a good idea. But we never dreamed we'd do more than pay dues to help support the site. Then, in 1995, I was asked to join the board because of my expertise in "interpretation." With a mission to "preserve and interpret" the site, it seemed the association was at a point to move beyond preservation to interpretation.

Walking away from that last meeting, I tried to figure out what made this board so special. I'd been on boards before, but none like this. I'd been on committed boards, friendly boards, diverse boards, and even effective boards. But none that were all of the above. The hardest thing for a board to do is to be effective. It involves action, but requires constant focus upon the inner struggles, confrontations, and common goals of its members. Doing this while

maintaining respect, civility, and a sense of fun can be a challenge. A sense of fun is important. We're all volunteers – if it's not a good time, I'm gone.

The results ... the reflection ... of this board's effectiveness can be seen on the land itself. Obvious changes include the "Scientific and Natural Area" status, the management plan that directs us to maintain the natural condition of the land, the interpretive trail that makes the land more inviting for visitors, the removal of dilapidated structures and the road that led to them, the restoration of the original wetland that had been filled with gravel, and most obviously, the new log Interpretive Center. Behind the scenes, we acquired Terri as Executive Director (our only paid staff person,

and the best we could dream of), received grants to fund projects, held strategic planning sessions to keep focused, and formed a cadre of members, presenters, supporters, "Second Saturday Hikers," and volunteer site hosts.

I'm stunned by the accomplishments of this small group of ordinary people, with diverse backgrounds but common interests, who work together with a little time and a lot of enthusiasm, and become friends. As with most good efforts, I have received far more than I have given. And I'll be around. "See ya later."



wendy strombeck

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.

Welcome New Board Members!

Dick Slade of Minneapolis, Rick Anderson of Grand Marais, and Skip Lamb of Schroeder recently joined the SICA Board of Directors.

In addition to SICA, **Dick Slade** is also a member of the Minnesota Chapter of the Nature Conservancy. He and his wife Ella have walked the entire Superior Hiking Trail and found it both challenging and satisfying. Dick writes, "My family has been a seasonal visitor to the north shore for more than my lifetime, and we own property three miles southwest of Sugarloaf Cove. From several spots along our shore we can see the Sugarloaf Point, and I remember seeing the tugs standing off shore as they gathered up the log rafts to cross the lake. It was a rare and wonderful time when such a raft broke up and our shore would be littered with clean logs - we could make our own rafts, or build forts, or create other wonders until the collector boats came along and reclaimed their logs."

Dick's philosophy? "One of my retirement tasks, self-awarded, is watching Lake Superior to make sure that no one steals it. I want our grandchildren to have similar concerns - that our natural resources are only stolen from us when nothing can be done - that we have to guard and care about ephemeral wildflowers and threatened worts. If not us, then who?"

Rick Anderson is the owner of the Sweetgrass Cove Guesthouse and Bodywork Studio in Grand Marais, which he advertises as a "retreat for body, mind, and spirit." Rick has also traveled around the world as a cruise line director.

Skip Lamb grew up in Schroeder, and his family has owned Lamb's Resort for almost 80 years. Skip is intimately involved with the Schroeder Area Historical Society and has worked to help SICA over the years in many ways. His construction, finance, and management expertise will be a great asset to the Board.



wendy strombeck

A Deck Worth Dancing On!

The Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center now has a deck - thanks to the generous contribution of decking material from Aspen Research Corporation! The decking material demonstrates the true meaning of "materials management." The deck boards are molded from waste

vinyl and sawdust from Andersen Windows Corporation. They require no finishing or maintenance, other than sweeping. AND, the surface is not slippery, as tested by Terri in high-heels when the deck was wet. The deck was inaugurated during John Schroeder Days. An access ramp was added so that everyone will be able to use the building. Stop by and see this wonderful and generous addition to the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center!



Terri Port Wright

Furniture Worth Sitting On!

During the past year, SICA has received generous donations to pay for the indoor and outdoor furniture at the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center. A small metal plaque has been mounted on each piece of furniture, indicating the generous donor who helped purchase the item. Thanks go out to the following donors:

*Elmer Andersen
Barb & Robert Liukkonen
John Green
Pat Maus
Gerry Heller
Jean Ljungkull
Steve Pihlaja
Art Pihlaja
Terri and Al Wright
Bob and Jean Port
Jack and Genea Pichotta
B.J. and John Kohlstedt
Wendy Strombeck and James Waldo
Margaret and Kermit Carlsen
Jim and Fran Mullin*

Cove

It's a warm and windy day at Sugarloaf Cove – the Sunday before Labor Day. My kids are throwing rocks into the Lake, trying to make them skip. We wander down the cobble beach of the Cove, cross the rocks to the Lake shoreline, and enter a whole new ecosystem. The wind is much, much stronger, and it is very cold. Andy suggests we go surfing, and Bobby, after consideration, thinks the water might be too cold. We sit for a while and watch waves crash into the rocks, feeling the threat of Fall in the air. Then we wander back to the warmer Cove and settle in to learn how to blow bubbles with bubblegum.

Today I am “the best Mom ever” because I can blow bubbles. I sit as long as the boys want, knowing the longer we are away from the building, the more work my husband will get done on the deck. As we blow bubbles and throw rocks and the boys tell me all that is on their 6-year old minds, I ponder how it is often the little things in life that can mean the most. While teaching how to blow bubbles may not change the future of the planet, it further solidifies my relationship with my wonderful children. I also know that teaching kids the importance of our planet's health could actually change the world!

I just returned from San Francisco, so this time with Bobby and Andy is very special. While on the West Coast, I made several presentations on the restoration project, and many people commented that it seemed like I thought I could change the world. I guess I do. I sincerely believe that if we each act as



TERRI PORT WRIGHT

though our actions and thoughts and words really mean something, that if we care for others and our planet, the world can be changed. And I also sincerely believe that it is usually the little things that end up meaning the most in life.

My family and friends know that I am a day-to-day person, meaning that I believe that sharing the routine parts of life, not just the momentous occasions, is what binds us together. It is also the routine parts of life – picking up trash, pulling exotic plants, working on a deck – that will ultimately shape the ability of SICA to meet our objectives of preservation, restoration, and interpretation.

The boys finally tire of beach time, and we wander back up to the building. We stop at the pump for water and I think of the building that it once served, of the lives affected by Sugarloaf when it was Sugarloaf Landing, and of the lives that will be affected as it remains Sugarloaf Cove. I hope that Bobby and Andy will bring their children to Sugarloaf Cove and tell them stories about the place, about the importance of the place, and how it ties us all together. Then I will know that we succeeded in our mission.

TERRI PORT WRIGHT

Taconite Harbor Dedication



Barb Liukkonen

On September 8, 2001, the Schroeder Area Recreational Boat Harbor at Taconite Harbor was officially dedicated. This represents the best sort of success story... Sugarloaf Cove has been preserved for future generations to enjoy, and a recreational harbor has been created at Taconite Harbor to provide safe access to Lake Superior for those who wish to enjoy the lake by boat. A number of SICA representatives were on hand for the dedication. Emily E. Andersen made the trip from her current home in Connecticut to address the gathering, and long-time Board member John Green read a letter from SICA's Founding Director, Elmer L. Andersen.

THE WORDS OF EMILY E. ANDERSEN

Certainly gratitude is the key word today. While acknowledging those just mentioned in the letter we have heard, may I extend profound gratitude in two additional directions:

First, to the Schroeder community, with the hope that we would all look with admiration upon a community that worked very hard for 20 years to achieve this harbor and then kindly allowed others to join the effort for an additional 10 years. To name two community members crucial to the harbor, I would cite Marion Calph and Kevin Johnson who have served Schroeder Township in numerous roles during the planning stages.

Second, may I express gratitude for the workings of democracy and our belief that if people commit themselves to rigorous, truth-seeking discussions, to many meetings, and to cooperation with others, there can be results beneficial to all.

Because of the Taconite Harbor collaborations, we have

- An expanded Scientific and Natural Area at Sugarloaf
- Also at Sugarloaf, public trails, a building for education, and ongoing research by the Department of Natural Resources and others
- A second Scientific and Natural Area, "Iona's Beach"
- Two stops for kayakers on the Water Trail
- Plans for an additional public water access at Twin Points
- And this jewel, our harbor, so appropriate in scale, so beautifully constructed. Let us thank those who physically created this facility.

In conclusion, to each one of you, and to Steve Pihlaja, Lorrie Stromme, and to Dad [Elmer L. Andersen] who could not be here today, please accept my profound gratitude.

THE WORDS OF ELMER L. ANDERSEN

In recognizing some of the people who played key roles in this long project I would start with Emily Andersen. It was she who spread the first alarm that the North Shore Management Board had singled out Sugarloaf Cove and Point as the recommended site for a recreational boat harbor. Sugarloaf had previously been designated as a scientific and natural area to be protected under state law. This effort became one of saving Sugarloaf but responsibly developing a useful alternative.

Wheelock Whitney was helpful in gaining administration attention. The support of Governor Arne Carlson was crucial as was the work of his Chief of Staff, Ed Stringer (who is now Justice Stringer) in shifting the DNR focus from Sugarloaf to Taconite Harbor. Commissioner Rod Sando became a decisively helpful worker, as did many members of the DNR. The Schroeder Town Board, other town boards, and county commission were gracious in considering the alternative and management. And the legal staff of LTV Steel Company and Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company were generous and helpful in lease negotiations. The North Shore Management Board were helpful in adjusting their recommendation.

Representative Willard Munger and Senator Gene Merriam were helpful in obtaining state financing and Representative James Oberstar and his staff obtained the federal share of financing. Steve Pihlaja and Lori Stromme were key in all efforts from start to finish. The DNR, the Corps of Engineers, and DOT worked together efficiently to produce the result we celebrate today. Many more than those mentioned were helpful and I hope their satisfaction and reward will be in the knowledge that they were helpful and shared in a significant public improvement. May the Schroeder Town Board take particular satisfaction in knowing that a dream and effort spread over more than 20 years has finally been accomplished. Congratulations and best wishes to all of you fortunate enough to be here on this centerpiece of John Schroeder Days.



Looking back:

Major accomplishments during the past year include:

- ✓ Completing the restoration project planting and brochure development.
- ✓ Completing the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center, including finishing all furniture, some walls and landscape planting around the building, and securing volunteer hosts to keep the Center open during the weekend afternoons.
- ✓ Designing and securing decking from The Aspen Research Corporation for the deck.
- ✓ Compiling and publishing the book: Grand Portage Chippewa.
- ✓ Designing and cutting in the trail to the wetland for observation.
- ✓ Securing a Lake Superior Coastal Zone Grant to complete the wetland trail and upgrade the trail guide.
- ✓ Use of an MCC crew to do trail work, planting, and exotics removal.
- ✓ Numerous presentations on the Grand Portage Chippewa book, the restoration project, and SICA.
- ✓ SICA met its matching challenge grant for 2001 from the Andersen Foundation during the first 3 months of the year!
- ✓ The Management Plan was completed and submitted to the DNR SNA staff for approval (received) and submittal to the CAC.
- ✓ We continued to offer guided hikes during the past 12 months.

Looking forward:

During the next year we plan to work on the following projects:

- Complete the trail into the wetland, with informational kiosks, a raised boardwalk, and updated trail guide.
- Initiate an exotic removal and control research project that will result in a better understanding of upland exotic control; publish a brochure and slide show using the results.
- Continue to offer guided hikes and other programs.
- Continue staffing the Interpretive Center.
- Work jointly with the MN Parks and Trails Council, the Superior Hiking Trail, and The Nature Conservancy on environmental projects and issues facing Northeastern Minnesota.
- Work to secure grants to support the educational, research, and programmatic efforts of SICA.
- Work in calendar year 2002 to match the challenge grant from The Andersen Foundation.

Hudson Bay Eyebright

Did you know that Sugarloaf Cove is home to a state-listed "Special Concern" species - the Hudson Bay eyebright, *Euphrasia hudsoniana*, variety *ramosior*. Growing inconspicuously on the rocky point jutting into Lake Superior, the tiny Hudson Bay eyebright is a member of a small group of arctic-alpine plants whose southernmost range is the northwestern shore of Lake Superior. It is also found in Ontario and on Isle Royale, but not in Wisconsin or mainland Michigan.



Mike Lee, MN DNR

Thousands of years ago, the Hudson Bay eyebright may have been common around Lake Superior as the last of the great Pleistocene ice sheets retreated to the north. As the climate warmed, the eyebright also retreated to the north, but it still remains in isolated locations along the North Shore where the habitat is suitable. In Minnesota it grows within 10 meters of Lake

Superior on the exposed volcanic bedrock of the shoreline where the combination of impervious rock (which simulates the impervious permafrost of the tundra) and the moist, cool, microclimate close to Lake Superior provides the conditions it needs. It typically roots in shallow cracks and crevices above the wave-wash zone.

Hudson Bay eyebright is an annual that typically grows less than 6" high. The tiny flowers are white with dark purple lines and a yellow spot. It flowers in July. You must search carefully to find it - June may be too early to

look for the leaves, and August may be too late, as it dies back to the roots.

The Hudson Bay eyebright colonies are at high risk for trampling! If you see this plant at Sugarloaf Cove, walk carefully and do not disturb the habitat. It is one of the unique inhabitants that makes Sugarloaf Cove such a special place.

Is it a Weed or Not?

Did you know that Lupines are not native to northeastern Minnesota? Neither are Hawkweed, Ox Eye Daisy, or Birdsfoot Trefoil! In order to help northern Minnesotans and others develop effective weed control strategies, SICA is embarking on an exotic plant removal and control project that will actually test out what the most efficacious removal technique is: weeding, spraying, cutting flower and

seed heads, black plastic, or weed whipping. Test plots will be set up at Sugarloaf and each strategy will be implemented and monitored for the next five years. Hopefully, we will come up with an answer to the question: how do I get rid of this exotic plant. If you are interested in this project, or in learning more about non-native upland plants, contact Terri.

Congratulations!

At The Nature Conservancy of Minnesota's annual meeting, held recently at Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, the Chapter

honored Chel Anderson, SICA Board member and lifelong conservationist, with their 2001 Conservation Award. Congratulations to Chel!

SICA ACTIVITIES

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10

Topic: Using Maps and Compasses;

Leader: B.J. Smith Kohlstedt

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17

SICA Board Meeting

10 am - 2 pm at the Sea Grant office in Duluth

SATURDAY DECEMBER 8

Topic: Winter Animal Adaptations;

Leader: To be announced

All "Second Saturday Hikes" start at 10 a.m. from the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center.

Spreading the Word

Thanks to the creativity of SICA's Executive Director, Terri Port Wright, the story of the Sugarloaf Wetland Restoration Project was recently shared with new friends at the Resource Renewal Institute and the office of Region 9 EPA in San Francisco. Why San Francisco? Terri was headed there for the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, where she presented a paper on the topic of alternative careers for women with a Ph.D.

Before leaving Minnesota, Terri searched the Internet and the phone book for organizations in San Francisco that might be interested in the restoration project. She found what she was looking for with the Resource Renewal Institute (a non-profit dedicated to helping communities develop and implement Green Plans) and the EPA Region 9 office (struggling with how to conduct major wetland restoration projects and how to do cooperative, public-private projects). Terri reports that the contact person at EPA grew up in Hibbing and was also hungry for news about the Northland!

Joint Efforts for Environmental Preservation

The Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association recently joined with the Minnesota Parks and Trails Council, the Superior Hiking Trail Association, and The Nature Conservancy to celebrate a cooperative effort that has advanced the protection of the North Shore.

Earlier this year, the Parks and Trails Council and The Nature Conservancy worked together to acquire a 630-acre parcel of land near Egge Lake to exchange for land in Crosby-Manitou State Park. This purchase and exchange allowed the

Superior Hiking Trail Association to build 15 miles of new trail to close a long-standing gap in the hiking trail. To commemorate this cooperative effort, on September 29, celebratory hikes were held on the new section of trail followed by a barbecue dinner at the Sugarloaf Cove Interpretive Center.



"THE EVOLUTION OF THE WORLD IS A GREAT MANIFESTATION OF GOD.

AS SCIENTISTS UNDERSTAND MORE AND MORE ABOUT THE INTERDEPENDENCE

NOT ONLY OF LIVING THINGS BUT OF ROCKS, RIVERS - THE WHOLE OF THE UNIVERSE -

I AM LEFT IN AWE THAT I, TOO, AM PART OF THIS TREMENDOUS MIRACLE.

NOT ONLY AM I A PART OF THIS PULSATING NETWORK, BUT I AM AN INDISPENSABLE PART.

IT IS NOT ONLY THEOLOGY THAT TEACHES ME THIS,

BUT IT IS THE TRUTH THAT ENVIRONMENTALISTS SHOUT FROM THE ROOFTOPS.

EVERY LIVING CREATURE IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE WHOLE..."

DESMOND TUTU

Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association
244 Marks Road
Esko, MN 55733

SICA OFFICERS

Founding Director

Elmer L. Andersen

President

Barb Liukkonen

First Vice President

Tim Dickson

Second Vice President

Art Fenstad

Secretary

Pat Maus

Treasurer

Howard Olson

Executive Director

Terri Port Wright

*The Sugarloaf Interpreter is published quarterly by Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association. Subscription is a benefit of membership. Single copies available on request.
Editor: Nancy Nelson, nancynelson@duluth.com. Designer: Wendy Strombeck.*

Annual memberships are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Sugarloaf Interpretive Center Association, and mail to SICA at 244 Marks Road, Esko, MN 55733. SICA is an educational, non-profit 501(c)(3) Minnesota Corporation.

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.
244 Marks Road, Esko, MN 55733

THANK YOU!