VAN VLIET NEWS

Spring 2001

(Photo by Tom Olson)

View of Van Vliet Lake and the rest of the Presque Isle Chain

2001 Annual Meeting Set for July 1st at Presque Isle

The 2001 annual meeting of the Van Vliet Lake Association has been set for Sunday, **July 1st,** at the Presque Isle Community Center beginning at **3:00 PM**.

We will again have a special program featuring noted author and naturalist, John Bates

John Bates to speak again at Annual Meeting

Last year, John Bates presented a fascinating discussion entitled "A Cultural History of Lakes and Rivers of Northern Wisconsin" at our Annual Meeting. It was so well received that we have decided to ask him back this year.

This year's program will focus on aquatic birds of the northwoods area. He will emphasize birds commonly seen along shorelines and on the water in the northwoods.

In addition, he will focus on the specific habitats of certain birds which are most likely to be seen, and give good identification tips as well as a sense of their "personality."

It ought to be another great presentation!

Boat Landing Update

As we go to press with this issue, the DNR plans to start construction on the boat landing as soon as the load limits come off the roads. They indicate that it normally takes about 30 days to complete a boat landing project – depending on whether and other construction issues. If all goes according to plan, we ought to have a new boat landing by mid-June.

As you probably recall, the landing will include seven stalls for parking rather than an open parking lot and a 12' wide ramp. In addition, there will be a removable dock. It will be located on Crab Lake Road between the current landing and the property owned by Steve and Nancy Frank.

Name for Boat Landing

Although there is support within the Association for naming the boat landing in honor of Jules Novak, there is resistance from the DNR due to specific rules regarding such namings. We may not be able to convince the DNR to do this.

Jules spent many years of his youth as well as later years on Van Vliet Lake. He provided guide service for many years. With his wife, Barb, they raised two sons on the island. Jules was always known for his friendly, talkative spirit and his willingness to share his vast knowledge of fishing. Jules also participated in early attempts by the prior lake association to improve Van Vliet Lake.

If this idea is supported, we would request that the DNR design and maintain a sign at the landing in the name of Jules Novak.

2000 Annual Meeting

The highlight of last year's meeting was a presentation by noted area naturalist, John Bates. His presentation on "The Cultural History of Lakes and Streams of Northern Wisconsin" was a fascinating discussion of the impact of our water resources on life in the northwoods from the times of the Indians through the great timber sales until now.

The lakes and rivers provided great routes for movement by the Indian tribes and the early settlers. There are still the remnants of one trail visible in Iron County from the times of the Indians.

An interesting fact was that the rivers were used to transport only pine logs from the area. Hardwood logs did not float as well so that all the pictures we see of logs going down the river were pictures of pines. Once the pines were cut, the ability to use the rivers for transport put a real crimp on the timber activities.

Winter 2000-2001

Once again, we have had an "old fashioned" winter in the northwoods. For those of us who spent Christmas in the woods, there was lots of snow for skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling. Ice came early to the lake, snow cover was nearly immediate, and winter showed few signs of ending as of late March.

All of this causes us to wonder about the impact on the fish population this year. After good recovery from past harsh winters, we may be faced with a loss of some of our fish this year. Fish kills are already showing up in Southern Wisconsin as the ice recedes.

For those who are on the lake when the ice goes out, we would appreciate your observations on impact on fish – large impact or small impact and on which species. Please send your observations to Tom Olson at 837 Sauk Ridge Trail, Madison, WI 53717 or at tolafl@attglobal.net on the internet.

New Residents

We are aware of 2 new owners on the lake. Jill Willms has purchased the Voorhies property on Baer Road. Jill is a retired teacher from the Milwaukee area and plans to live in the northwoods full-time.

Tim and Kim Bowler have purchased Alpine Lodge from Forbes and Toddy Taylor. They moved in over the winter and are getting ready to operate this spring. They have moved to Alpine Resort from the Chicago area with their daughter, Cameil. We wish them the best of luck in their new venture.

To Re-zone or Not to Re-zone?

This question was posed to the attendees of last summer's annual Lakeowners' Association meeting and the group decided to look to the broader membership for advice.

Currently the properties surrounding Van Vliet Lake are zoned "recreation" which opens individual parcels to a wide range of multi-family and commercial uses that to some feel would threaten the tranquil nature of our lake. A "recreation" zoning classification allows properties to be used for everything from single family residences to motels, resorts, marinas, taverns, and retail sales and service outlets to mention a few.

The original impetus to research our various zoning options was to find ways to restrict "keyholing" which allows lake access to off-water properties that could include multi-family residential or rental properties that might spring up around the lake. Our research found that adequate restrictions to keyholing appear exist at both the Town and County level based with access to the lake being regulated by frontage feet versus property zoning. There is already a keyhole created on Van Vliet for off water users on Baer Road.

However, the wide range of other potential uses of recreation zoned properties have some property owners believing re-zoning properties surrounding the lake to single family residential would be in everyone's best interest. Several other lakes in the area have taken this action.

Re-zoning properties surrounding Van Vliet Lake, while helping to maintain the current lake setting and usage levels, does have some drawbacks.

Such zoning does limit potential property uses that some current and future owners might consider. Uses such as guesthouse/apartment rental or home occupations that would require outside storage of materials or inventory are specifically prohibited under this zoning classification. However, single family residential zoning does allow, among other uses, such as non-rental guesthouses, home occupations that require less than 50% of structure space and no outside storage, and, with a conditional use permit, even bed & breakfast establishments. Also, any existing business on the lake such as Taylor's (Bowler's) resort would be grandfathered allowing them to continue operations.

To re-zone all properties surrounding Van Vliet Lake petitions containing the signatures of a super majority (90%+) of all current property owners and our case for re-zoning must be filed with both the Town and the County.

In addition, the Town of Presque Isle is currently proceeding with a master plan development. This will have some impact on potential zoning in the Township.

We would like your opinion on this matter. We ask that you please complete the form included with this newsletter and return it with your annual dues. If there appears to be enough interest in pursuing this rezoning, we will begin the process.

If you would like any additional information before deciding whether or not you would support a re-zoning of the lake properties, feel free to contact Paul Specht at 1-608-845-8094.

Northern Lights??? Forest Fire???

No. What you see when you look to north is neither the northern lights nor a forest fire. It is the lighting at the Camp Ojibway Correctional Facility in the Upper Peninsula. There is a group of Presque Isle area residents trying to address this situation. For more information, visit their website at http://home.centurytel.net/wildernessskies/ .

Forbes & Toddy Taylor

Forbes and Toddy Taylor have sold Alpine Resort to Tim and Kim Bowler. As neighbors of the Taylors and located directly across from the resort, we will never forget our concern when the resort was going to re-open. Would it be noisy? What kind of clientele would it develop? Would Forbes support the kind of tranquility that is most important to the residents on the lake?

In each instance, the answer was that the resort was always a great neighbor!

We have all watched with great concern as Forbes has fought his way through his physical problems. We all admired his enormous optimism and positive outlook. Toddy has also had some battles, and she always has been a cheerful neighbor.

Forbes has also been active as the Vice-President of the Lake Association since its beginning. His support to our efforts has been very important.

We wish them well and hope they can find a place to live which is nearby so they can continue their interest in Van Vliet.

Association Board/News

The present Board members for the association are:

Tom Olson	-	President
Forbes Taylor	-	Vice President
Jim Sprester	-	Secretary
Nancy Frank	-	Treasurer
Barb Novak	-	At-large
Jim MacAdam	-	At-large

Those who will be up for election at this year's annual meeting are Jim Sprester, Nancy Frank and Barb Novak.

The association remains in good financial shape with $1980.68 in the treasury (plus $150 on deposit for the annual meeting). We are a member of both the Wisconsin and Vilas County lakes associations. Last year $575 in dues was collected.

Many thanks to Dave Sidlo for his donation in the printing of this newsletter!

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip Code_____

I am interested in serving on the

- Aquatic Plant and Algae Committee _____
- Water Quality Committee _____
- Fishing Committee _____
- History Committee _____

Naming of the Boat Landing -- "Jules Novak Landing"

_____Favor _____Oppose _____No Opinion

Suggestions on areas of focus for Association:_____

_____

Other Comments_____

Enclosed please find my membership check in the amount of

(min. $10) payable to the Van Vliet Lake Association, Inc.

Your membership is tax deductible. Your check is your receipt.

Mail to: Nancy Frank, Treasurer
Van Vliet Lake Assn, Inc.
4918 Fond du Lac Trail
Madison WI 53705

MEMBERSHIP SIGN-UP

_____ Yes, I (we) would like to see the re-zoning of properties surrounding Van Vliet Lake from "recreation" t

"single family residential" pursued.

Comments_____

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_____ No, I (we) would not like to see the properties surrounding Van Vliet Lake re-zoned

Comments_____

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