VAN VLIET NEWS

ISSUE #3

SUMMER 1995

TRAIL'S END

On April 23, 1995, a dear friend to Van Vliet Lake, and to all of us, died. Jules Novak was 87 years old and lived a life which can only be described as full and interesting.

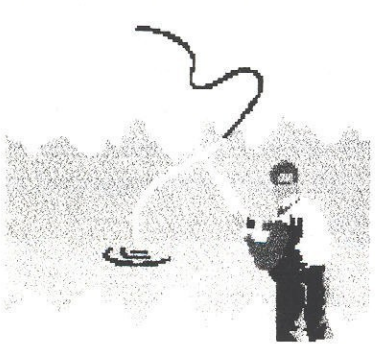
I cannot do justice to all of the stories which Jules told and which people tell about Jules. Barb, his wife, is our Lake Association History Committee chair and, hopefully, we can learn a lot about Jules through Barb.

I can say this. We bought our cabin in May of 1977, and Jules went out of his way to befriend us. He was always willing to share his knowledge of Van Vliet Lake and fishing. He had a million stories (or at least a thousand stories that he would tell a thousand times), a quick smile and loved kids. He knew the outdoors like very few.

Jules guided me to my first legal musky on Van Vliet Lake - caught it right off Smithson's place on a black bucktail. We caught two other muskies that day - a good day's work!

Jules loved Van Vliet Lake and the Northwoods. My wife and kids always enjoyed his stories and his friendly nature. We will miss Jules, but we are certainly all better for having known him. Our best to Barb and all of Jules' family.

Jules spent a great part of his life (since age 12) on what we call Novak's Island. It was originally a resort called Trail's End.



1995 ANNUAL MEETING

This year's annual meeting is scheduled for July 2, 1995 at Taylor's Alpine Resort. The highlight of the meeting will be a program presented by our neighbor, Renn Karl, on an exciting project to monitor and assess the water quality in Van Vliet Lake.

For those who do not know Renn, he resides on the west bay of Van Vliet Lake and is a science teacher at North Lakeland School. Renn and his wife, Barbara, have been resident on the lake for many years. Renn has agreed to be our Water Quality Committee Chair.

Renn has received a National Science Foundation grant to conduct research into water quality on streams in Vilas County. This grant also includes the opportunity to study lakes near North Lakeland School. The involvement at Van Vliet Lake will involve mapping the lake using GPS methodology and then collecting "abiotic" information and "biotic indexing" of the water. The purpose is to collect this information over several years to gain a better understanding of the quality of the water in Van Vliet Lake and any trends that may be occurring.

Several other related programs may provide additional opportunity. They are the "Adopt A Lake" program and the "Self Help Lake Monitoring" program. The program also involves working with several scientists at the University of Wisconsin, Edgewood College and the Trout Lake Limnology Station.

Since the program will require ongoing monitoring and is an outstanding educational opportunity, Renn is interested in learning of young people who will be resident on the lake during the summer (or throughout the year) to assist in the project.

This project should provide an excellent beginning in our understanding of Van Vliet Lake. The Association is deeply indebted to Renn for his interest in this effort. We are all looking forward to his fascinating presentation.

Other agenda items that day will be: reports from the other committees; election of officers; treasurer's report; general information sharing; and good fellowship.

Forbes and Toddy Taylor have gratiously invited us to hold the meeting at Alpine Resort. Light refreshments will be served for which there will be a nominal charge to defray the costs.

The annual meeting will be held July 2, 1995 at 2:00 PM at Taylor's Alpine Resort. ***Please RSVP to Forbes and Toddy at HC1 Box 89, Presque Isle, WI 54557.***

COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

Other notes from the Steering Committee meeting on May 28th are as follows:

* as of that date, there were 29 paid memberships (several more were paid that day) - a good start;

* our filing for tax exempt status is still pending with the IRS;

* we could use some more volunteers for committee work; please give it strong consideration;

* the Town of Presque Isle has an ordinance regarding the use of personal watercraft ("jet skis"); it is that they are to be operated as follows:
  - only between the hours of 11 AM and 4PM
  - no wake within 200' of a shoreline;
  - no wake on lakes between 50 and 200 acres (that will include Averill Lake);

* there is a new Coast Guard requirement that watercraft be operated with a wearable personal flotation device (vest) for all occupants plus one throwable device in the boat;

* this year's walleye limit on the Presque Isle Chain is 3 per day; there is no size limit specific to the chain.

COMMITTEE MEETS WITH DNR

On May 28th, members of the Steering Committee and various Committee chairs met with Harland Carlson, DNR Fisheries Biologist for Vilas County stationed at Woodruff. The purpose of the meeting was to get acquainted, share information and share interests in the health of the fishery in Van Vliet Lake.

Mr. Carlson provided some data and information regarding DNR observations of Van Vliet Lake. The DNR considers Van Vliet Lake to be part of the Presque Isle Chain for management purposes. This is based on the fact that they have observed fairly free movement of adult fish back and forth between Presque Isle Lake and Van Vliet Lake. This observation was based on marked fish which were captured and released in each of the lakes.

The implication of this is that fish will move between the lakes to find the best spawning and foraging areas. This likely results in a fair number of fish moving into Presque Isle Lake to spawn but moving back to Van Vliet because of the large number of forage fish.

According the Mr. Carlson, the creel survey done in 1992 found that fair walleye success was had and that fish in Van Vliet ran slightly larger than did fish in Presque Isle. Interestingly, no muskies were reported caught in that creel census - something which I found surprising. To no one's surprise a large number of perch were reported, a sizable number of crappies and a large number of northerns. The overall conclusion of that survey and other surveys is that the fishery is in good health with good natural reproduction.

Mr. Carlson believed that the increase in the number of bullheads over the last decade is most likely related to the large winterkill which occurred in 1986. Since that winterkill was very hard on crappies and bluegills (two species susceptible to winterkill situations - others susceptible are muskie and walleye), it is surmised that bullheads produced heavily and filled that slot in the food chain previously occupied by crappies and bluegills (bullheads, northern and perch are less susceptible to winterkill). Mr Carlson indicated that crappies are reproducing in the lake and can be expected to increase in numbers.

Winterkill occurs most often when there is an early freeze followed by a heavy snowfall which stays for the winter. Under those situations, there is low light penetration in the lake, and plants will not get the necessary sunlight to continue to create oxygen in the lake. As the oxygen diminishes, those fish most susceptible to winterkill will suffer.

The Presque Isle Chain has not been stocked in a number of years and does not appear to be a candidate for stocking based on the information received. This is due to good natural reproduction on the chain.

When asked what we can do to best help the fishery, Mr. Carlson replied, "I would urge you to keep your septic system up to code" -- good advice for lots of reasons.

Jim Freckmann, a neighbor who lives on Hurst Lake, an avid fisherman, and a member of the Van Vliet Lake Association agreed to take on the duties of Chair of the Fishing Committee. Jim will work with the DNR to garner a better understanding of Van Vliet Lake and what we can do to improve the fishery. Jim would very much appreciate the assistance of anyone interested in working with him. Please write to him at HC1 Box 91a, Presque Isle, WI 54557.

OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

The officers and committee chairs of the Association are as follows. All officers will serve until the first Annual meeting when members will vote on the officers.

President: Tom Olson
837 Sauk Ridge Trail
Madison, WI 53717
(608) 831-0837

Vice Pres: Forbes Taylor
HC1 Box 89
Presque Isle, WI 54557
(715) 686-2800

Treasurer: Nancy Gross
HC1 Box 106
Presque Isle, WI 54557
(715) 686-7626

Secretary Jim Sprester
N54 W33365 Terrace
Nashotah, WI
(414) 367-7321

Aquatic Plant & Algae Control

Jim Rottman
4420 N. Winchester
Chicago, IL 60640
(312) 561-1363

Water Quality

Renn Karl
HC1 Box 117
Presque Isle, WI 54557
(715) 686-2369

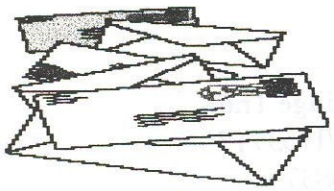
Fishing

Jim Freckmann
HC1 Box 91a
Presque Isle, WI 54557
(715) 686-7356

History

Barbara Novak
HC1 Box 109
Presque Isle, WI 54557
(715) 686-2825

All of the Committees need your help.



MAIL

WAKE ADVICE

...Also, please let people know. Don't go half fast! Either no wake or full throttle. It's much easier on the shoreline. If the longer gas line is used to place the gas tank forward, the boat planes better and one is less apt to get caught prow up in a wind.

Sincerely, Barb Novak

-Editor - Tom Olson

1995 MEMBERS

Through May 29th, the following are paid members of the Association:

Nick & Rita Andrews
Gil & Dorothy Boeker
Frank & Gloria Bradley
William & Lois Jean Castle
Marion & Gerald Dunne
John & Dona Fagan
Steve & Nancy Frank
Jim & Sheila Freckman
Ken & Nancy Gross
Dick & Karen Harris
Joe & Noreen Janda
Renn & Barb Karl
Stan & Judy Kleinert
George Kupfer
Carl A. Lekan
Jerome Lekan
Don & Lorraine Liter
Wayne & Mary Ann Martin
Barb Novak
Jay Novak
Jon Novak
Richard & Carol Novak
Tom & Barbara Olson
Al Orel
Ken & Nancy Ruffner
Al & Mary Ann Smithson
Steve & Linda Smithson
Paul & Sharon Specht
Jim & Kathy Sprester
Forbes & Toddy Taylor

Please get your membership in and attend the Annual Meeting. If there is an error in the membership list, please let Nancy Gross know.

Membership is open to any individual, family, business or organization which supports the purposes of the Association, owns or leases property within 1 mile of Van Vliet Lake or is resident within 1 mile for at least 1 month/year.