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# THE CULLEN CURRENTS

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*Fall, 2013*

## **2013 Lake Friendly Shoreline Awards**

At the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Cullen Lakes Association membership, two properties on the Cullen Lakes chain were honored for having a lake friendly shoreline.

Recipients of the 2013 Lake Friendly Shoreline Awards are Margaret Hasse and David Grothe, Lower Cullen (L25 on the map/guide) and Patty and Larnce Hicks, Middle Cullen (M91 on the map/guide).

In accepting their award at the meeting, Margaret said their natural shoreline has become home to numerous birds and that they have marsh marigolds and showy lady slippers among the 22 species of wildflowers present.



In an email shortly after being notified of the award, David said, "It is such an honor to feel that our shoreline has been kind to the lake, as we hope it to be, for the lake has been so friendly to us these last fourteen years that we have owned our property."

Patty and Larnce Hicks, who live in Oklahoma, were not able to attend the meeting to accept their award, but Patty said in an email, "We have been trying to encourage wild flowers and native grasses to grow along the shore and on the slope in front of the cabin, as well as doing as little as possible to disturb the ice ridge from its natural state."



The photo above was taken at the end of August when Patty was back at the lake for a while. It shows the unmowed slope in front of the cabin on which they are trying to establish a variety of wildflowers.

## Mary Ryan Charms Annual Meeting Audience

by Carol Lindahl

Nearly 60 Cullen Lakes property owners gathered on Saturday, August 10 for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting. Guest speaker Mary Ryan, of Ryanland on Lower Cullen, held everyone's attention with her details of history on the lakes and the surrounding area.



Shannon Hurley introduced Mary, who has been on Lower Cullen Lake since 1933, when FDR started his first term as U.S. President and bread cost 7 cents. Mary noted that Ryanland was built in 1936 and has hosted five generations of Ryans, Hufnagles and Hurleys.

The clan had a family reunion in 2011 to celebrate 75 years on the lake – a highlight was towing 13 skiers around the lake. Mary gave a detailed and entertaining report on the history of the Cullens and Nisswa, noting changes in the downtown businesses and in property owners on the lake over the years.

The meeting also included an update on the treatment of curlyleaf pondweed (CLP) on the Cullens. President Ann Beaver reviewed the work of the Invasive Species Committee and the results of our CLP treatments this year. We selected Clarke Aquatic Services, based in Clearwater MN, as our new vendor after a thorough RFP and interview process.

She noted that we did not elect to continue with PLM (our applicator since the 2009 treatments) because we were not happy with the results of their treatments, the company was not easy to communicate with and their treatment costs had greatly increased from what we were charged during our initial contract.

Clarke's total invoice for our treatments this year was just over \$21,000. PLM's cost, based on their proposal to us, would have been over \$38,000. In addition to this savings, we have found Clarke to be very customer-focused, easy to communicate with, and their reporting to us and the maps they have provided have been excellent. She noted that we expect to use Clarke again next year.

At registration, attendees received a booklet with 2014 financial information and reports from the CLA committees. Members approved the 2014 budget and candidates for the Board of Directors. Re-elected to the Board were Paul Beilfuss, Lower Cullen; Charlie Boudrye, Middle Cullen; Dan Hurley, Lower Cullen; Jim Kostreba, Lower Cullen; Carol Lindahl, Lower Cullen; and Dan Meixner, Middle Cullen. Joining the Board for their first term are Jim Burrell, Lower Cullen, and Kathryn Kriewald, Middle Cullen.

Attendees also had the chance to review numerous exhibits and purchase Cullen Lakes merchandise.

### CLA Committees -- 2013-2014

#### Administration

Carol Lindahl, chair  
Paul Beilfuss  
John MacGibbon

#### Budget & Finances

Paul Beilfuss, chair  
Charlie Boudrye  
Bruce Helland

#### Education

John MacGibbon, chair  
Ann Beaver, newsletter  
Charlie Boudrye, web site  
Bruce Helland  
Carol Lindahl

#### Environmental Issues

Ann Beaver, co-chair  
Bruce Helland, co-chair  
Jim Burrell  
Rich Johnson  
Jim Kostreba  
Carol Lindahl  
Dan Meixner

#### Water Quality

Ann Beaver, chair  
C.B. & Linda Bylander  
Charlie Boudrye  
Rich Johnson  
Dan Meixner  
Denny Opsahl

#### Invasive Species

Ann Beaver, co-chair  
Carol Lindahl, co-chair  
Paul Beilfuss  
Dan Hurley  
Rich Johnson  
Jim Kostreba  
Dan Meixner  
Denny Opsahl

#### Lake Management Planning

president, chair  
all committee chairs

#### Land Development

Ann Beaver, chair  
Charlie Boudrye  
Jim Kostreba  
Jack McNamara

#### Membership

Charlie Boudrye, chair  
Ann Beaver  
Carol Lindahl

#### Fish Management

Dan Meixner, chair  
Dan Hurley  
Denny Opsahl

## Cullen Lakes and Nisswa Memories

*(first installment)*

by Mary Ryan

The Quinn Resort, now Good Ol' Days, was owned by Bridget and James Quinn. Bridget Quinn, Aunt Bid, was my mother's aunt. In 1933 my mother's siblings and their families rented the Quinn lakeside cabin 1 and 2. It was a side by side with a connecting door. So, 1933 was my first time at Lower Cullen Lake. I have been on Lower Cullen every year since 1933 except for 1935, 1951 and 1952.

In 1934 our family rented Emily McCabe's cabin and cute one room log cabin (now Benedict's, across the creek from Good Ol' Days). I was just 8 years old and walked across the rickety bridge daily to watch Uncle Jim Quinn build two boats. One was an easy task, a flat bottom boat. But the second boat, a regular round bottom boat, took many days. I remember that he soaked the wood slats in a trough of water so that they would be supple enough to round. I was fascinated watching but also intrigued by the lean-to ice house filled with 50 pound chunks of ice and thick saw dust to keep the ice insulated from the heat. The ice was kept frozen even in the record breaking heat of 1936. He had cut the ice during the winter and had enough to furnish his 14 cabins. The train tracks were just behind the resort and the McCabe cabin. The train ran a couple of times a day and once during the middle of the night. It blew its whistle a couple of blocks before crossing Poplar Road and nearly blew us out of our beds. The train tracks have been removed and replaced by the Paul Bunyan Trail. From our dock we liked seeing the train in the clearing on the southwest end of the lake.

In 1933 Dr. MacGibbon purchased land on Lower Cullen and built the existing MacGibbon cabin. In 1936 Jim Ryan, my dad, purchased land and built the Ryanland cabin on the north shore of Lower Cullen. They both purchased the land from Ralph Quinn, son of James and Bridget Quinn. Ralph Quinn still owned a parcel of land between MacGibbon's and Ryan's and eventually Dr. MacGibbon and Jim Ryan purchased the land so that now their two properties abut.

In 1936 the now Wilderness Point Resort was owned by Wayne and Mary Dietz, hence its former name, Way Ma Dee Point. Grandma Dietz is buried on the point.

From Highway 371 to Pine Acres Resort the road was very narrow, curvy and had very loose sand. We would honk the horn of our Model A Ford summer car to alert oncoming cars that we were approaching. The road from Pine Acres to Bailey's was wider, firm gravel and had two small hills and one big hill, so going fast gave us a roller coaster thrill. Mr. Olson, from Olson Farm on County Road 107, worked for the county or township and scraped the sand roads after each rain. Just east of Pine Acres were three tall pine trees -- and a great crappie fishing hole about 75 feet out from shore.

Pine Acres, like Quinns Resort, was a Ma and Pa resort. It had a homemade tennis court and ball field. I do not know when the cabins and land were sold off individually (*editor's note: 1961*), but Mr. Loomer, a retired Industrial Arts teacher from Iowa owned John MacGibbon's cabin before John. Mr. Loomer remodeled the Ryanland kitchen in fall of 1974 and spring of 1975. The Sherman cabin and Bolger cabins date to before 1936. The Bolgers had three daughters: Katherine, who used to put out buoys and swim laps daily; Betty, who married Ken Hirschey and built a cabin next to her dad's cabin; and Virginia, who married Phil McGuire and took over the Bolger cabin. The McGuire's second generation have built a larger cabin on the property. The full log cabin in the channel from Lower to Middle was built in 1936 or 1937.

On the east end of the lake was Swartwoods South View Resort, six or seven cabins that ran vertical to Lower Cullen and the property extended to lakeshore on Middle Cullen. Swartwood sold to Bedner who moved the cabins to face Middle Cullen and sold some of the lakeshore on Lower Cullen. The Rich and Dorothy Johnson home is on the former Bedner property and Dorothy is a daughter of the Bedners.

Dr. Rutherford built the red brick faced cabin on the east shore. He used the front room of the cabin as his doctor's patient room. My sisters went across the lake for hay fever help.

The channel from Lower Cullen to Lake Nisswa was wider and very navigable by rowing or canoeing and even slow motoring after you got under the old 371 highway bridge. We screamed and covered our heads as we rowed through. Uncle Jim Quinn made a dam with rock and boards to hold the water level in the Cullens. Mr. Lundberg, who lived near the channel from Middle to Upper Cullen, during the dark of night, would pull out the boards to lower the water level and give his shoreline more land -- or just to be ornery. After Uncle Jim died, Quinn daughters Emily and Marge ran the resort and cared for their mom, Aunt Bid. Aunt Bid died just before her 100th birthday. They sold the resort and it was renamed Sikaren.

A summer at the lake was not complete unless we boated to Gull Lake and had our picnic lunch on Lake Margaret. We always stopped at the same dock -- the owners were never there -- but year after year there would be a swarm of tiny baby bullheads in the shallow water.

*Editor's note: Mary's memories will be continued in the winter newsletter. The next installment will deal with some history of the Nisswa area, more of Mary's experiences on the lakes, as well as those of a few other families on the lakes that she interacted with.*

## Another Successful Road Clean Up

by Anne Kostreba

Minnesota has one of the most successful Adopt-A-Highway programs and that is evidenced by the enthusiastic involvement of groups like our Cullen Lakes Association.



Seventeen CLA members (and one visiting sibling) showed up Saturday, August 31 to participate in our fall road clean up. Nothing of material value was found this time but lots of good conversation was shared amongst our members. Seventeen bags of garbage were collected, much less than what we normally collect in the spring.

Many thanks to the following: Rich Johnson, Jack and Barb McNamara, John Maguire, Ann Beaver, Dan Meixner, Tom MacGibbon, Lisa and Ellen Hirschey (and brother Paul who was visiting and provided the camera for the picture), Dan and Mary Hurley, Bruce Helland, Jim MacGibbon, Jim Brophy, and Jim and Anne Kostreba. Because of back issues, Darlene Asmus couldn't participate in the actual pick up but she manned the snacks and beverages on the back of a pickup. She said she could have sold a lot of corn. Apparently people passing by thought that was why she was sitting there. Fall in Minnesota!

## Fisheries Update

by Dan Meixner

After a conversation in early July with Marc Bacigalupi, DNR Area Fisheries Supervisor, I have the following to report.

\*There are no major changes from previous years planned.  
\*The proposed Aquatic Management Area (AMA) on Upper Cullen Lake in front of the former Stallion Ridge property will not be pursued by the DNR. The AMA would have required the land which was recently acquired by Crow Wing County.

\*The last fisheries/lake survey of all three lakes was done in 2009 and is available on the DNR website. The next one is scheduled for 2014.

\*Walleye fingerling stocking is done every third year and was last done in 2011. It is planned for Middle Cullen in 2014 and 2017.

## CLA Merchandise for Sale

At the request of several members, CLA is now selling merchandise with the new CLA logo. Sweatshirts and T-shirts of several styles and colors, as well as caps, coffee mugs, and glasses are available for purchase. Orders received by October 30 will be shipped to you in time for holiday gift giving.

Please visit the CLA web site -- [www.cullenlakes.org](http://www.cullenlakes.org) -- for complete details on styles, colors, sizes, and prices of shirts, as well as descriptions and prices of mugs, glasses, and caps. A sample order form is also on the web site.

Prices include shipping and handling. Orders should be sent to Bruce Helland at [bghcullen@gmail.com](mailto:bghcullen@gmail.com) or 4865 Wilderness Ridge Rd., Nisswa, MN 56468. Payment (check made out to CLA) should be sent to CLA, P.O. Box 466, Nisswa, MN 56468.

If you do not have internet access and want to order merchandise, call Bruce (phone number is on the address page of this newsletter) and he will mail you the order form.



## Electronic Newsletter, Anyone?

Enjoy the newsletter in color and help CLA save on the cost of printing and mailing the hard copy. To receive *Cullen Currents* via email, simply notify the newsletter editor of your preference.

*Editor's note: Following are the committee reports from the 2013 Annual Meeting.*

### **Administration Committee**

Carol Lindahl, chair

The Administration Committee organized the 2013 Annual Meeting, in conjunction with the full Board of Directors. Each year the organization strives to provide an interesting program and displays. The Committee has also continued working on creating a procedures manual for the CLA, as recommended in the Lake Management Plan's goals and objectives. We have committed to completion of this project in October this year.

### **Budget and Finances Subcommittee**

Carol Lindahl, chair

An annual financial audit was completed this summer and no issues were found. The committee has reviewed the Association's financial status and believes that our finances are in good shape. We also prepared the 2014 budgets for review and adoption at the Annual Meeting.

### **Education Committee**

John MacGibbon, chair

The CLA Education Committee maintains two major sources of information about the Cullen lakes and the lakes association: Cullen Currents, published quarterly and edited by Ann Beaver, and the Cullen Lakes website: [www.cullenlakes.org](http://www.cullenlakes.org), under webmaster Charlie Boudrye. We are currently revising and reorganizing our website, with full rollout planned for later this year. In addition, the committee makes other resource materials available to members at no charge.

The committee also works with the Environmental Issues committee to help judge and award the Lake Friendly Shoreline Awards and the Most Improved Shoreline Awards. We welcome input from association members on additional topics of interest.

### **Environmental Issues Committee**

Ann Beaver, chair

#### Highway pick up

Last fall's road clean-up was accomplished by 13 Cullen Lakers on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. The May 25, 2013 road clean-up had the best turn out ever – 18 people who picked up 22 bags of trash from the highway's shoulders!

#### Shoreline restoration/preservation

At this Annual Meeting CLA is presenting its eighth annual Lake Friendly Shoreline Awards. Congratulations to this year's winners:

Lower Cullen – David Grothe and Margaret Hasse  
Middle Cullen – Patty and Larnce Hicks

There were no nominations this year for the Most Improved Shoreline Award.

My sincere thanks to those of you who are leaving a buffer of unmanaged native plants along the water's edge and/or working to restore your shoreline to a natural state or choosing to leave it in its natural state. A buffer at least ten feet deep is the best, but even an area a couple feet deep of native plants, trees, and shrubs on the shoreline will help. Your individual efforts will make a cumulative positive impact on lake water quality and wildlife habitat!

#### Aquatic plant identification project

We are looking for volunteer lakeshore property owners who are willing to be trained in aquatic plant identification later this month. Ten Cullen Lakers were trained last August and we would like to train additional people so we can have a pool of knowledgeable volunteers from whom to draw to do an annual aquatic plant sampling on all three lakes. For more detailed information, refer to the article in the summer newsletter.

### **Invasive Species Subcommittee**

Ann Beaver and Carol Lindahl, co-chairs

This has been a busy year for the Invasive Species committee. Following last year's treatment of curlyleaf pondweed (CLP) on our lakes, we undertook an investigation of the results and concluded that we still had a large growth of CLP. In late June and early July, volunteers from the CLA Board created GPS maps of all CLP growth during the early summer (before the CLP died back in mid-July). We met with the PLM, our applicator, and with the DNR to assess the growth of CLP and discuss options for the future. Because of poorer than expected treatment results, PLM verbally offered to treat 20 acres free at some time in the future. We continue to request that offer in writing.

In early fall 2012, we issued a formal request for proposals (RFP) to several local applicators. (Our four-year contract with PLM expired at the end of 2012.) Following the RFP we interviewed four applicators, including PLM, and selected Clarke Aquatic Services to provide surveying and treatment in 2013. The selection of Clarke was based on our history of treating CLP, their cost per acre treated, their recommendations of how they would treat the CLP, and

references from current clients. Our selection appears to have been a good one, based on the better treatment results than in previous years at a lower cost per acre treated.

During the winter months, we completed permit applications to the DNR, anticipating this year's CLP treatment needs based on our mapping. We also successfully applied to the DNR for grant funds and received funding of \$100 per acre treated for up to 104 acres. This spring Clarke surveyed all of our lakes to detect CLP growth. These surveys used our mapping results, information we got from the DNR on their mapping last summer, and information on where we have treated CLP historically. Clarke created treatment polygons, shared them with us and the DNR, and completed treatment at the end of May. Clarke has completed post-treatment surveys and will also survey the lakes in October to detect any CLP present.

We continue to actively survey the lakes to map any CLP growth following treatment this spring. Because of the unusually late ice-out and other considerations, we are hesitant to declare a WIN vs. CLP this year, but the results look particularly good so far.

We will also be mapping any growth of purple loosestrife and will ask the DNR to treat it for control as they have for the past several years.

### **Water Quality Subcommittee**

Ann Beaver, chair

The committee continues to do its monthly water testing from May through September. Results from last year and thus far this year again show the lakes to be within the normal range for lakes in our ecoregion. A complete report will be published in the winter 2014 newsletter and posted on the CLA web site. To assist in applying for DNR grants for the treatment of curlyleaf pondweed, CLA has a Lake Water Quality Plan for each lake. The plans were written in 2008 and the water testing results are used at the end of each year to update the plans.

To enhance our water clarity data, we now have two people on Lower Cullen and Middle Cullen taking Secchi disk readings. We still would like one more person taking readings on Upper Cullen, too. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact me.

### **Lake Management Planning Committee**

Ann Beaver, chair

The 2011 updated CLA Lake Management Plan is used by committee chairs and CLA officers to help guide them in their activities throughout the year. The Plan is available for viewing on the CLA web site: [www.cullenlakes.org](http://www.cullenlakes.org). Go to the News Page and click on "Lake Management Plan."

Once again, I encourage you to volunteer to serve on the CLA board of directors or as a non-board member on one or more of the CLA committees. To do so, simply contact me or the chair of the committee(s) you are interested in.

### **Land Development Committee**

Ann Beaver, chair

The committee monitors land use applications that involve properties on the Cullen Lakes and in their watershed, for what happens on land has a direct effect on lakes and streams. The three jurisdictions that regulate land use on the Cullen Lakes' shorelands are Crow Wing County (most of Upper and the east half of Middle), the City of Pequot Lakes (the far western part of Upper, the west half of Middle, and the very northeastern part of Lower) and the City of Nisswa (all of Lower except the very northeastern part). The committee has copies of each jurisdiction's land use ordinance and it bases CLA's position on rezoning, variances, and other land use requests on how well the request complies with the requirements of the ordinance and on the potential environmental consequences of any allowed deviation from the ordinance.

This past year was again a relatively quiet one for the committee during which it submitted written comments to Crow Wing County regarding a variance application before its Board of Adjustment and it assisted the Pequot Lakes Zoning Administrator by providing a photo from the lake showing the property owner in question had resolved a shoreline violation.

### **Membership Committee**

Charlie Boudrye, chair

Membership in the Cullen Lakes Association is a total of 261. There are three complimentary members (new property owners on the lakes) compared to four last year. We have 17 Associate Members, meaning they are former lakeshore property owners, a property owner in the lakes' watershed, or a family member of the lakeshore property owner.



### ***Property Ownership Note***

*We need your help in keeping our property owner records up to date. If you sell your property, please let the membership committee know who the new owners are. If you get new neighbors at the lake, please do the same.*

**THANKS!**

## Middle to Lower Cullen Channel Update



On June 25, Lower Cullen property owner Gretchen Theis and CLA president Ann

Beaver met with Heidi Lindgren, the new DNR Area Hydrologist, and Ken Zeik, DNR Waters, to discuss the condition and navigability of the channel flowing from Middle Cullen Lake into Lower Cullen Lake. The DNR has received complaints off and on about channel encroachment since at least 1992.

The main issue discussed was the rip rap and large rocks on both sides of the channel. The rip rap was put in place through a grant in 1998 or so. During times of low water levels, many boaters believe it interferes with the passage of some boats through the channel, especially at the channel's narrowest point. Beaver provided the DNR with photos of the rocks and their placement and asked Lindgren to look into whether or not they are currently properly placed, since complaints had been received again about the rocks interfering with passage through the channel. Theis and Beaver also asked the DNR about what can and can't be done to help keep the channel passable by boats of all sizes.

Lindgren and Zeik promised to look into the matter and report back to Beaver with their findings. The following email from Heidi Lindgren to Ann Beaver on August 9 explains the DNR's position regarding the channel.

“Ken and I visited the channel between Lower Cullen and Middle Cullen this morning. We waded through the channel looking at both sides. The riprap on the east side appeared stable and does not obstruct navigation. The narrowest point of the channel was approximately 12 feet wide on the water surface and the water was about 1.5 feet deep in the center of the channel at this point. This channel has existed on this route since approximately 1960 when a longer, narrower channel was naturally breached to create the current channel. As a natural channel, it may not be suitable for navigation by larger boats, especially at times of low water levels.

At this time the DNR will not be taking any further action regarding the navigation issue on the channel.”

As a result of this most recent assessment by the DNR, boaters should be aware that during times of lower water levels it may be difficult or impossible to pass through this channel in a larger boat or pontoon.

## Upper Cullen Lake Property Protected

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) recently announced that it had purchased a 119 acre natural area located on Upper Cullen Lake and donated it to Crow Wing County, which will manage the property as part of the adjacent Crow Wing County Memorial Forest to the north.

The land, formerly owned by Jim and Linda Gammello was partially platted as Stallion Ridge. As part of the Crow Wing County Memorial Forest, it will provide hiking, hunting, and fishing opportunities for the public while protecting the biodiversity of the land.



The property is considered by conservation experts to provide critical habitat for a

variety of species of wildlife, including many of those in greatest conservation need, such as Bald Eagles and Blandings Turtles. It has over 1,000 feet of shoreline on a designated trout stream and over 1,400 feet of lakeshore, so keeping the land in its natural state will also protect important spawning habitat for a variety of fish.

The TPL is now applying for funds from the Conservation Partners Legacy Grant to purchase the remaining southern portion of this property (lightly shaded in the above map). The CLA Board of Directors has provided the TPL with a letter of support to help in its quest for these grant funds.

This is exciting news for people who enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking and just being outdoors in natural settings. This is a special place, and now future generations of Minnesotans are going to be able to enjoy it in its natural state.

### *Currents on the Cullens*

**New owners:** Jeffrey & Maureen Soderholm, Middle Cullen (M84); Christine Hauschel, Lower and Middle Cullen (L1)

**Deaths:** Bernhard (Barney) Englund, Lower Cullen (L92)

**CULLEN LAKES ASSOCIATION**  
**P.O. BOX 466**  
**NISSWA, MN 56468**

To protect, preserve, and enhance the three Cullen Lakes and their environs in order to ensure the continued vitality of the lakes, high quality fish and wildlife habitat, safe and healthful family living, and the survival of these natural gifts for future generations.

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