



TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter
Izaak Walton League
May 2020

www.breckenridgeikes.org



Karen Ostenso contributed this poem, written by another member of her friend's writer's group.

A Poem for Our Time

*We fell asleep in one world, and woke up
in another.*

*Suddenly Disney is out of magic,
Paris is no longer romantic,
New York doesn't stand up anymore,*

*The Chinese wall is no longer a fortress,
and Mecca is empty.*

*Hugs & kisses suddenly become weapons,
and not visiting parents & friends becomes
an act of love.*

*Suddenly you realize that power, beauty &
money are worthless, and can't get you the
oxygen you're fighting for.*

*The world continues its life and it is
beautiful. It only puts humans in cages. I
think it's sending us a message:*

*"You are not necessary. The air, earth,
water and sky without you are fine.*

*When you come back, remember that you
are my guests. Not my masters."*

by Haroon Rashid

Look how big the eaglets are getting!

If you haven't had a chance to live-view the DNR's eaglecam visit Friends of Minnesota Nongame Eagle Cam on Facebook or just to the DNR website:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/search?terms=eaglecam>



Opinion: An Unwelcome equation

There are 2 major things affecting the ecological balance of our planet. The demands of humans and the number of humans. The demands would not be so serious if the amount were less. This is true of our country also. When will our leaders reach correcting conclusions?

Dick Brown

Minutes - Breckenridge Chapter IWLA BOD meeting May 12, 2020

Karen joined the Zoom meeting about the International Wolf Center sponsored by the Minnesota Valley Ikes Chapter on Monday evening – to clarify, the Center does remain open in Ely, MN.

Steve (our own frontliner) gave a COVID-19 update with his situation at work. As reports on the news, gowns and facemask supplies are scarce but he is doing everything possible to stay safe. We will all need to be vigilant to keep ourselves safe.



The IWLA Board maintaining social

Board of directors meeting, called to order by Steve Schaust at 7:45 pm

Members present on Zoom call: Steve Schaust, Dennis Leslie, Barb Franklin, Dick Brown (via phone), Jerry Steele, Wendy Steele, Jim Arnold, Karen Karen Ostenso, Tim Johnson, Joe Klohs.

Thank you to Karen Ostenso for reciting the IWLA Member pledge.

In a Zoom meeting Steve was given a lot of guidance from National for meetings such as size of groups, when to hold meetings, etc.

It sounds like COVID-19 will be hitting the peak here in MN in June and we need to be mindful about getting together in person. National IWL doesn't want anyone to hold large public gatherings. Work w/newsletters and online communications. It will be a lot of extra effort to make connections with our members, keep interest, etc. Pancake breakfast will be on hold for now. Social/educational meetings are canceled until at least the end of summer; we'll have to wait to see.

Tim asked: Could we potentially do a Social/Educational Zoom meeting like the Wolf meeting? We might want to tie in with other Chapters across the state. There are many great speakers that we potentially could share.

At State Convention meeting, new elections took place: John Rust was appointed State President. The former president will help John work through the first year in support. John has promised that he will try to do a lot of new things to keep us ahead of the virus, Zoom meetings, etc. John is taking this on as his personal goal to pull us all through the COVID-19 virus – he is positive and energized.

Monthly BOD meetings for the next couple, on Zoom. This will be a light year for us; we'll try to just do small groups to keep up with property.

Anoka County is charging us property tax for eastern 1/3 of the island due to paperwork issues. The first half is approximately \$3,000 and will be returned to us by the second half. Jim has been waiting for over two weeks to get the paperwork which they are requiring. Joe asked for Jim to document dates and times that calls were placed and for a copy of the 990 from Steve and he will follow up directly with the Anoka County Commissioner, Robin West. Joe's plan is to go to the commissioner's house tomorrow to resolve this issue.

We will have a little loss in membership and also rentals for this year – expected to be around 30% drop nationally.

John Fraley sent financial summary for the month, we aren't bringing any money in, but we aren't spending anything either, so there is not a worry that we will go broke. We will keep heat and A/C to a minimum. Refrigerator and water heater are turned off. We are okay financially, but there are hopes that we can maintain our membership at same levels. Steve suggests that we plump up our newsletter with articles, etc.

Joe suggested that we form a small "task force" to break up the membership list to call and check in with our current members and also brainstorm ideas to get our newsletter on "neighborhood" and other ideas. Potentially we could "broadcast" our meeting on the internet to pull in extra community members.

Volunteers for retaining and gaining new membership: Jerry and Steve have both volunteered to help Mary Ellen get an "Action Plan" for next meeting. Websites, newsletters, phone calls... Barb and Tim need to get together to work at getting better quality of photos for electronic version of newsletter was also brought up. Karen has also volunteered to call a portion of members if that task becomes part of the Action Plan.

A handful of renters for graduations this summer, but the expectation is that they will most likely cancel. A few also scheduled for fall.

Champlin prairie garden this year is not looking good – there is no assurance that the property will be maintained. There is no plan to do anything this fall. The grass is so thick that it is doubtful that fresh seeds will even contact the ground, even with minimal expense. Dick has been in touch with the garden club and letting the city know that we are still interested in being involved with keeping the property maintained. Sue Schmidt is representing us and the garden club and has been meeting with the city of Champlin to stay abreast of the plans. Perseverance is the mark of a conservationist.

Anything needing to be maintained at the Chapter House right now? Tim noted: Another shipment of wildflowers should be received this week.

Jim noted that there is a lot of wild garlic mustard on the property that needs to be eradicated.

The stairs near the deck by the river, there is rotting wood that needs to be replaced. Jerry has volunteered to take a look – Joe will meet Jerry when he is ready to go take a look.

Dick mentioned a newspaper article about sewer work that is attempting to raid funding that is set aside for environment, vs. utilizing a bond. Tim will check to see if IWL has weighed in on this issue – we may want to write a separate letter.

Tim submitted some historic photos and an article to the National office – a list of original members, an old photo of the exterior fireplace. Steve mentioned that there was a former member who turned over all historical documents – Karen believes there is quite a lot of historical/memorabilia stuff that we may find of interest. Karen consolidated everything on the shelving space in the basement.

Oxbow Creek bluebird houses, and then the city burned the prairie... seemed like the bluebird activity slowed down for a while – being that the bluebirds are ground feeders, the burning of the entire field may have affected the insects which the bluebirds feed on. In the past, only sections at a time have been burned.

Steve has received the award certificate per our discussion in our last meeting – it will still need to be framed and presented to our recommended recipient.

We have also received a Dave Zentner Award for our Chapter being recognized for an outstanding Chapter.

Looking for speakers for late summer meeting for full membership – Melissa Hortman and/or John Hoffman have volunteered and will be strong candidates to consider. Melissa sounded very willing to stand in when we need her – she recommended Zoom.

2020 - 21 Scholarship Recipients Selected

By Jim Arnold

The Breckenridge Chapter scholarship committee again was challenged to select a small group of students from several outstanding applicants. Because of the pandemic the committee did all of its work via computer and telephone.

Mary Thelen is a graduate of Anoka High School who recently completed her junior year at the University of St. Thomas. She is majoring in environmental science with a concentration in biology. She is also majoring in Spanish. In the future she hopes to attend graduate school and have a career that studies environmental issues like wildlife conservation or natural resources.

This past January Mary took a month-long biology field research class in Costa Rica. The class traveled to four different sites over the course of the month and completed group research projects at each site. Some of the projects she worked on focused on restoration of endangered palm trees, species diversity of tide pools, and flock behavior of native and migratory birds. Mary writes that, “These experiences made me even more interested in wildlife conservation and natural resource management. I believe the United States and other countries can learn from what Costa Rica is doing and follow in their footsteps.”

Mary continues to work as a research assistant at St. Thomas in Dr. Kyle Zimmer’s lab. They are continuing a collaborative study with the Minnesota DNR looking at the effects of stocking muskies on freshwater lake food webs. In addition to the musky project, she recently started her own independent research project that focuses on environmental factors that influence the feeding ecology of walleye in lakes. She plans to present her work at the fall research symposium at St. Thomas, as well as at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference next February in St. Paul.

In addition to her busy school schedule Mary is a member of several clubs on campus including the Sustainability Club, the Geology Club, and the Tri Beta Biology Club

Willa Nagel Is majoring in Environmental Science through the Conservation and Resource Management track at the University of Minnesota. She is also planning on minoring in Soil Science. Willa writes that, “Depletion of soil nutrients and soil runoff are issues that have come up during this semester in my Soils Class. I have grown up learning about these issue and now I am learning about the science behind why these issues occur.” At the start spring semester, Willa joined the Soil Judging team. The team is made up of around 15 students and meets weekly. Competitions are held across the USA for Soil Judging. Pits are dug out to show the horizons (layers) that make up the soil. The team has to texture, analyze color, measure depth, and decide on the structure the soil horizons form. With this information the team decides if the land is suited for basement/dwellings, septic systems, roads etc.

Other outdoor pursuits for Willa have included skiing her first Birkiebiener (50 km), climbing with friends both indoor and outdoor, taking lots of hikes around Frontenac State Park and growing vegetables under a grow light and using propagation techniques I learned at University to cultivate her garden.



Gabriel Drayton will be graduating this spring from Maple Grove High School. He will begin his college career at Northwestern University next fall where he plans to study chemical

engineering. Gabe writes that, “At Northwestern my degree can be a culmination of a variety of interests in different topics, meaning I can focus on novel approaches for solving major environmental issues.” He would like to be a leader in reducing the United States carbon footprint and plastic waste.

Gabe has a major interest in electrical transportation – specifically batteries. A long term goal of his would be to work on developing batteries from sources other than precious metals. One possibility he feels should be considered is Liquid Air Energy Storage (LAES) which liquefies air and expands when discharged to create reliable energy.

Sierra Hinkel plans to begin college at Stevens Point Wisconsin after graduating from Andover High School this spring. She will major in forestry with a minor in Spanish. After college she expects to work as a forester in the west or Midwest. She looks forward to having a job where she can work outside.

Sierra makes some interesting comparisons with Costa Rica and the United States. The amount of renewable energy and the support of the environment by the government and most citizens.

Sierra has been involved in her school's environmental club and AP environmental class. She enjoys hiking, observing wildlife and camping. She has completed hunter safety, snowmobile safety and advanced bow hunting courses.



David Hainlen, is a graduate of Osseo High School and will graduate early from North Dakota State University in December (he is eligible for just a half scholarship). This summer he will work as an intern at Voyageurs National Park. After graduation David plans to earn a Ph.D. and

eventually become a research biologist specializing in plant ecology.

David continues to be concerned about the rollback of environmental protections. He is politically active and often contacts senators and representatives about his concerns. The potential impact of copper mining near the BWCA is an issue that especially concerns him.

Recently David and some of his friends created a new club at NDSU. The club is called Go Outside, the purpose is to educate and prepare people to conduct their own outdoor trips. What a wonderful gift to leave your school as you prepare for graduation.

The Breckenridge Chapter has now awarded 95 scholarships totaling \$48,100 in the twenty-two years of the program. As in years past, recipients can reapply for the scholarship for up to four years of their undergraduate careers. The main source of funding for these scholarships is an endowment fund established through the generosity of members. The endowment began with an initial donation from the estate of Irene Swanson in the summer of 1999, followed shortly thereafter by sizeable donations from Cynthia Haugland and Walter and Dorothy Breckenridge. The endowment continues to grow, thanks primarily to generous donations each year from Larry Swanson, Tom and Marilyn Breckenridge and John Breckenridge. When earnings from the endowment are not sufficient to cover the scholarships costs, fund raisers (like the annual silent auction) and special donations from other members have been used. Thanks to all those members who have made it possible to support local young people as they study for their environmental careers. If you have questions about the Breckenridge Chapter scholarship program please contact one of the committee members: Jim Arnold, Judy Arnold, Melissa Sonnenberg or Mary Ellen Vetter.*

- Almost all of the scholarship endowment fund is invested conservatively so has been impacted very little by the financial impact of the pandemic.

Methane Monitoring

The following is a summary of an article in Solutions the newsletter of the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF).

The Permian Basin is an area of about 86,000 square miles in southeastern New Mexico and western Texas. It produces more oil and gas than any other area of the world, and as of January 2020, the output is about 4 million barrels a day. Some of the drills are spewing methane from malfunctioning flares. The problem is that the amount of methane (and other air pollutants) is minimally measured and therefore unknown. Fortunately, when the source is found, it is relatively easy to stop the leak.

Methane is the primary component of natural gas and is thought to be responsible for at least a quarter of global warming. EDF is beginning to monitor and measure the release of methane in the Permian Basin. They are using a combination of high-tech detection, measuring and analyzing methods. One monitoring system is aerial. Spectrometers and infrared cameras in the airplanes can localize and quantify the amount of methane. Another prong in their attack is a mobile lab provided by the University of Wyoming. Penn State has 5 stationary monitors in the same area. And, although little detail was provided, data from satellites is incorporated.

In more traditional leak detection, compiling and analyzing this type of information is slow and time consuming. EDF has developed algorithms that work far more rapidly, making it available in a more timely fashion for those who must plug the leaks. EDF is also pointing out who is responsible for cleaning up, but forcing the issue is difficult due to lenient federal regulations. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently is trying to weaken those regulations.

Coincidentally, on Monday, May 11, National Public Radio (NPR) reported from a small town in the Basin about the effects of the current economic slow-down on the community. That report stated that there are 12,000 active wells in the Basin and recently production has been reduced by one million barrels per day. Some employees have been laid off and the town and county face significantly

reduced tax revenue. There was no comment in the NPR report about methane release, but I wonder if it is either increased or decreased by the reduction in production.

Karen Ostenso

The Inconvenient Truth of *Planet of the Humans*: We've gotten way too big for our planet

Excerpts from an article by Dave Gardner, Executive Director of World Population Balance and GrowthBusters

“Planet of the Humans must be one of the most-reviewed films in the history of cinema. That’s quite a feat for a film that has been in wide release for less than a month. My review here won’t bring up any new topics, but I will offer some fresh perspective and highlight the most important insights already offered by others.

“The controversy swirling around this film brings up mixed emotions for me. The film explores the most important subject in all of human history, so I’m glad to see it getting a lot of attention and so many views (over 7.5 million as of this writing, about 20 days into its [free, monthlong debut on YouTube](#)). But I do wish so much of the attention wasn’t negative. Of course, the negative attention has been backlash from the film’s harsh critique of renewable energy technology and some of its champions. One would expect those critiqued to offer a loud self-defense.”

NOTE: Because of the strong need to get the important take-aways from this film, and to chart a course correction, GrowthBusters and World Population Balance are co-hosting a free webinar on May 19:

To register go to:
<https://oneplanetonechild.org/planet-of-the-humans-webinar/>

[Planet of the Humans: a Sequel](#)

What did the film get right? And what should we do about it?

Upgrading Minnesota water systems: Vital to our health, a boost to our economy

Minnesota's new 'Fix the Pipes' alliance announces support for at least \$300 million in bonding to fund largest-ever statewide investment in water infrastructure. We Ikes support the "Fix the Pipes" initiative partially because we want to alleviate another attempt by Republican legislators to raid the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) to pay for water infrastructure. (Reminder: that is why we and other members of the Minnesota Environmental Partnership joined in a lawsuit last year to stop that raid.) We can best protect the ENRTF – which provides among other things, a larger share of the funds for the SNA program - by advocating to "fix the pipes" through a bonding bill.

First, thanks to the 28 organizations who have agreed to work together on this project. They represent a broad array of interests ranging from three local Government Associations (LMC, CGMC, MRWA), to Engineering Companies, (ACEC/MN), to labor (Blue Green Alliance), to multiple environmental and conservation organizations. And thanks to staff from many of these organizations whose talent and tenacity has helped move this effort forward. It is truly a group effort.

You can see the full list of the groups involved (*includes the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America*) at the www.FixThePipes.org website. Please take a minute to review this site, which is just now being activated. Let us know of any questions or suggestions you may have. I expect it will continue to be refined as we go forward.

Bonding is actively being discussed at the legislature now. We have announced our broad alliance to promote a large comprehensive bonding bill with at least \$300 million in water infrastructure... We are planning on having speakers represent each of the major interest areas as well as a representative of Greater Mankato Grow, Inc.

In addition, the team will be providing... a social media packet that organizations can use to raise the profile of the issue and help drive people to the FixThePipes landing page and/or to your own sites. In addition to background and updates at FixThePipes.org, visitors will be able to generate printed letters to their legislators in support of investment in water infrastructure.

I also encourage your organizations to echo the press event with a water infrastructure Action Alert early next week. You can help drive people to the FixThePipes site or you can connect to your own website, email or other communications systems, or both, to contact legislators.

It's not apparent when a bonding bill will clear the legislature, but all the ingredients are in place for a significant bill to emerge in the near future, or maybe sometime this summer?

Thanks for all your work on this. And let me know of questions or suggestions. Best, Steve"

Steve Morse
Executive Director
Minnesota Environmental Partnership



Opinion:

Reducing old growth for “early rotation” timbering – hunting

As an old time Grouse hunter during the late 1940's until 1980 I experienced the decline of the grouse populations during that time and I hear about it even now. (Both Ruffed and Sharp tail) Noticing the Ruffed Grouse Society is promoting more cutting of timber to “bring back” their population naturally interested me. It is true that Grouse do better in recently cut over areas if there are enough old growth popple and conifers nearby for winter bud feeding and cover.

Ideally timbering for deer and grouse and certain other species would be a patchwork of areas resembling forest fires and blowdowns historically. But timbering is not a perfect match for these natural events for various reasons we could present.

Many species not interesting to hunters but necessary for balanced ecology and of interest to naturalists and much of the general public reside in old growth, not to mention esthetics of old growth, especially of conifers.

I do not know what the balance of grouse was before 1850 but we know deer were fewer in the North. Old growth, especially conifers with plenty of spruce trees is the habitat of the “fool hen” (Spruce Grouse).

I really do not think it is wise to accelerate timber harvesting of our woodlands just to accommodate the timbering industry, deer and grouse hunters. There needs to be a larger percentage of old growth of all our native species. This is true from pineries in the North to our hardwoods in the Southeast. “Extended rotation” would be a better answer and “no rotation” in Old Growth designated areas. Old Growth areas need to be expanded.

Dick Brown

“Cover It Up”



The problem with buckthorn

Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) is one of Minnesota's most notorious invasive plant species. Originally introduced in the 1800's as an ornamental plant for hedge rows, buckthorn has now invaded forests throughout the state and can be found in almost every county. Buckthorn devastates native ecosystems as it shades out native plant species and reduces habitat quality for wildlife. Minnesotans are working hard to remove buckthorn, but keeping buckthorn out for good is an ongoing challenge. After its initial removal, buckthorn quickly returns through resprouting from cut stumps and from seeds in the soil.

What we know

The Cover It Up! research project investigates if re-establishing native plants can control buckthorn following removal efforts. Through a combination of field experiments, researchers have been able to determine the limits of buckthorn shade tolerance and identify key levels of shading that result in native species excluding buckthorn. In particular, it has been shown that woody species are capable of producing this level of shading under some circumstances, but if, when, and where seed mixtures can result in these critical level of shading is still unclear. To better understand the potential value of seeding the University is working with Citizen Scientists to expand the study throughout the state.

(continued on p. 6)

(continued from p. 5)

What Citizen Scientists are doing

The Citizen Science project works with volunteers throughout the state who are interested in conducting ecological research and in contributing to more sustainable buckthorn control. Participants include landowners with buckthorn on their property, public or private land managers, non-profit groups, schools, community or friend groups, faith groups and many others.

The project is expected to run through summer 2022 and will focus on forested and woodland areas throughout the state where buckthorn is currently present. Participants are removing buckthorn from an area ~ 30 x 40 ft and will establish six 5x5 ft squares within this area where they will replant with native seed mixes containing a variety of grasses, sedges, wildflowers, shrubs and trees. Each summer between 2020-2022, participants will report information about their plots back to the program.

“Breck Buckthorn”

We planted our native seed mixture April 11, just in time before the snow storm. The seeds included were: Side-oats Grama, Hairy Woodland Brome, Canada Wild Rye, Bottlebrush Grass, Silky Wild Rye, Virginia Wild Rye, Little Bluestem, Nodding Fescue, Switchgrass, Wirestem Muhly Grass, Common Woodland Sedge, Sprengel's Sedge, Showy Tick-trefoil, Sweet Cicely, Blue Giant Hyssop, Red Columbine, Smooth Blue Aster, Wild Bergamot, Black-eyed Susan, Lance-leaf Figwort, Tall Meadow Rue, Blue Vervain, Golden Alexanders, Wild Black Currant, Chokecherry, Black Cherry, Pagoda Dogwood, Red-berried Elder, American Basswood.

Our test plots already have a few chokecherry shrubs in them and are generally shaded by a canopy of white oak and green ash trees. Can you guess which plants will possibly thrive and out-compete buckthorn on our property?

Tim Johnson

Jim Arnold and Tim Johnson are our hardworking volunteers.



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If you would like to submit an article for the Timberlines, please send it to
Barbara Franklin at: bbfrankli@gmail.com
Deadline is the 10th day of each month.

All articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the position of the Breckenridge Board of Directors. The Editor reserves the right to edit material as necessary.

Pancake Breakfast

Our family missed the IWL pancake breakfast this year. So, we had our own.
We even had new plants to remind us of the plant sale.

Laura Fuller

We missed it too! Thank you Laura, Hebron, Jeff and Israel!

