

RAINY LAKE CONSERVANCY

Preserving the Rainy Lake Watershed



Fall Newsletter: October, 2020

Celebrating the Beauty of Rainy Lake Recent Photos



Empty Hammock: Missing You
by Kim Embretson

Look to the West
by Thatcher Peterson



President's Message



I'm sorry I can't write about the wonderful summer I was able to spend at Rainy Lake – I was only able to be there virtually via Zoom with our Canadian friends on the lake. I am hopeful to be back next summer to enjoy the special spots we all treasure.

However, I did get great joy from learning that the Rainy Lake Conservancy received a special award this summer – Minnesota Land Trust's "Partner of the Year". We have had a long collaborative and mentoring relationship with MLT in support of our cross-border conservation efforts. We created the Rainy Lake Fund at MLT which enables US members of the Conservancy

to make charitable gifts to support our science and conservation work on the Lake and our annual operating costs – most of you get our annual appeal letter to support this Fund. The Fund has also supported conservation on the US side of Rainy. MLT most recently provided training for our volunteer monitors who make a "hands-on" visit each year to all of our conserved properties. We all should feel very proud of this recognition.

While we all participated in our Annual Meeting this year on Zoom, I did want to reiterate points I made about how our conservation and science research efforts are helping to mitigate climate change that is occurring on Rainy Lake. Enhancing and protecting red and white pine tree cover through land protection helps keep the land cool while the trees absorb CO₂. Estimates for Rainy River for 2021-2050 show an anticipated rise in mean precipitation, temperature, tropical nights, hot days, cold days, and later dates of fall frost. Our efforts are likely having a mitigating impact well beyond the footprint of our conserved properties.

Hope you all are enjoying a colorful fall season and staying safe and sane,

Carolyn Wallis
President

Remembering Carl and Charlotte Lenander



It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Carl Lenander last February. Carl and his wife Charlotte, who predeceased him, were members of the Rainy Lake Conservancy for approximately 20 years. Carl had an early introduction to Rainy Lake, having spent some of his boyhood summers at his grandfather's Emerald Isle cabin in the South Arm. Both he and Charlotte loved the lake and spent many happy years on Dragonfly Island where they were vibrant and beloved members of the North Arm community. One of their good friends, Andy Westerhaus, said that he will miss all the good chats he had with Carl over politics, electronics and solar power and the fine dinners of homemade sauerkraut, horseradish and spareribs that he and his wife Mary shared with Charlotte and Carl. Another close neighbour and friend, Ed Haddon, added that Carl and Charlotte had great senses of humour, that they were innovative and led the way with information on improving one's living situation off the grid. Donna Howells who lives on Birch Island year-round shared the same view. She went on to relate how both Charlotte and Carl knew how to solve almost every problem related to living on remote Rainy Lake islands and that they could always be called upon to help. They were good neighbours!

As Andy stated, Carl was a brilliant PhD physicist. He worked for many years at the renowned Aerospace Corporation in Segundo, California, where he pioneered computer programming and satellite imagery for the U.S. defense department and authored many technical papers for the Air Force Space and Missile Division. At that time, Charlotte also worked for Aerospace, as a project manager. They were brought together in Germany when Carl was the lead engineer on one of her projects. It was there that they acquired their fondness for German food and wine. That fondness was translated into gourmet meals which they prepared for their neighbours and friends.

Over their many years as RLC members, even when the weather wasn't great, Carl and Charlotte made the long trip from the North Arm to attend our annual general meetings at the Rendezvous Hotel. Carl followed up with emails over the winter to keep up on anything related to the health of the lake.

As Andy Westerhouse commented, Carl and Charlotte were brilliant but unassuming! We will miss them as members of the Rainy Lake Conservancy and of our Rainy Lake community.

Rainy Lake Conservancy Honored

2020 Minnesota Land Trust Partner of the Year



Carolyn Wallis displays the award

Rainy Lake Conservancy has been awarded the honor of the Minnesota Land Trust “Partner of the Year.”

“The Rainy Lake Conservancy truly is one of our unsung heroes when it comes to conservation,” says Kris Larson, executive director of the Land Trust. “Over the last 20 years they have worked side by side with the Land Trust to further land protections in the Rainy Lake area watershed and had an unmistakable impact on the area.”

View the video honoring the [Rainy Lake Conservancy](#)

A rare example of a cross-border land trust partnership, the groups have successfully protected miles of shoreline and nearly 500 acres of land including the four Review Islands where Ernest Oberholtzer, a founding member of the Wilderness Society, lived.

Former Rainy Lake Conservancy president Phyllis Callaghan explains that, “In 1996 a group of Rainy Lake cottagers met to discuss the possibility of forming an organization to preserve the natural beauty and ecological values of the Rainy Lake and in 1999 the Rainy Lake Conservancy, a non-profit Canadian organization, was started.”

Near the same time, the Minnesota Land Trust was also protecting land along Rainy Lake. With similar goals in mind they decided to form a partnership and work together with private landowners to retain the area’s wilderness qualities of clean water, majestic red and white pine trees, rare flora and fauna, uncluttered shorelines, and exceptional beauty.

“We are thrilled by the award and grateful for our partnership,” says Carolyn Wallis, current President of Rainy Lake Conservancy. “Along with the public lands that are protected in the area, it’s important for private landowners to also play a role so that the area can continue to be enjoyed as wilderness and treasured outdoor experiences for present and future generations.”

The Land Trust also is honoring the people chosen as 2020 Landowner of the Year (Carter and Florence Hedeem of Park Rapids, MN), and Volunteer of the Year (Jim Odden of Alexandria, MN). In lieu of an in-person gathering, readers may view a video celebration at www.mnland.org/treasured available September 23.

Visit www.mnland.org and www.rainylakeconservancy.org for more information on these partner conservation organizations

Annual General Meeting Update

Creativity Required! (The First-Ever International Zoom AGM Meeting)

I believe all readers will agree that Covid-19 has prescribed how the summer of 2020 played out for all of us. With the closing of the Canadian-United States border, and the extending and extending again that closure, many of us had to redesign how we spent our summer recreation time.

As the summer progressed, and the border remained closed, it became apparent that the Annual General Meeting of the Rainy Lake Conservancy would not be taking place at the Rendezvous in August. The Board of Directors was left with this question: When and how are we going to gather our members for the required AGM - Annual General Meeting?

That question hung in the air for what seemed a long while as we considered our options. The decision was eventually made to try to conduct the first-ever International Zoom meeting of the Rainy Lake Conservancy AGM. The logistics of working out the details were a bit tricky. But Lake People are resourceful and good at solving problems, right?!

After a lot of experimentation, and sincere efforts to make sure that our membership had gotten information on the “how-to’s,” the AGM convened on August 9, 2020 at 2:00 pm. There were 33 people in attendance, some on computer and some by phone.

President Carolyn Wallis ably led us through the business items that needed tending to, including her report updating us on the easements projects which are already complete and those that are in the works, a process which helps protect the beauty and pristine qualities of Rainy Lake. We also voted in the Board of Directors for 2020-2021, including new member Patty Freeman.

By 2:21 p.m., 33 people from 2 countries, several provinces and states had accomplished the task at hand: conducting our first-ever international Zoom AGM meeting. It wasn’t fun. We missed seeing our lake friends and renewing connections. The hors d’ouvres were not very tasty, at least not at our house. BUT ... we got the job done. Kudos to all involved.

So, adieu until next year’s AGM. Hopefully in person!

Conservation News

Inside Twin Metal’s Plan to Pollute

(reprinted from the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness Blog)

It’s no secret that copper-sulfide mining has a near perfect record of polluting, or that Twin Metals’ plan to build such a mine at the footsteps of the Boundary Waters would inevitably lead to an environmental disaster.

We have long warned that, if built, Twin Metals’ proposed copper-sulfide mine would cause irreparable harm to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness and pollute some of the cleanest water on Earth. Copper-sulfide mines, such as the one proposed by Twin Metals, produce acid mine drainage (AMD), which is toxic runoff of sulfuric acid that is devastating to land and water resources. In a water-rich environment such as northeastern Minnesota, the consequences would be even more severe.

Twin Metals and their allies have argued that they will build an “environmentally friendly” 21st century mine, one equipped with the modern technology that will prevent pollution.

When Twin Metals released its Mine Plan of Operation late last year, it was a chance for us to closely study the kind of mine they intend to build. [Click here for full article](#)

Renew your membership

Memberships keep the important work of the Rainy Lake Conservancy on the move. Many of you always renewed your membership in person at the Annual Meeting, so this year, we are seeing many members who have yet to renew. Please renew your membership online or by mail and invite your friends and family to join the Rainy Lake Conservancy. Would you consider giving a gift membership to introduce someone to the Conservancy? New members are always welcome and are needed in order to continue this important work.

You may join, renew or donate at:

<http://www.rainylakeconservancy.org/page-1323796>

or by mailing your check to:

Rainy Lake Conservancy, Post Office Box 223,
Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada. P9A 3M6.

Annual Dues are \$30 per person or \$40 for a family membership.

The Mission of the Rainy Lake Conservancy is to work with property owners, governments, and local communities to preserve and protect the natural beauty, historic features, ecological and recreational values for present and future generations within but not restricted to Rainy Lake.

Please send your ideas for future newsletters to the editors:

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