



THE NORTH BRANCH

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE AU SABLE NORTH BRANCH AREA FOUNDATION

Spring/Summer 2017



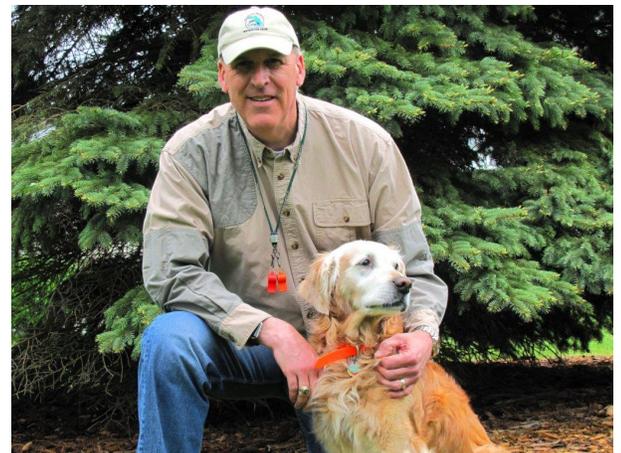
From the President's Desk

Summer greetings from your Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation. Upon receiving this newsletter, a pleasant summer should be in full swing, and we should all be enjoying our time along the favorite stretches of our beautiful river. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing support of the Foundation's work, and to remind you that our Foundation works on behalf of you and the continued enhancement and protection of our natural river system from threats man-made or otherwise. If you have concerns, or have interest in a project which you would like us to consider, please contact any board member and we will be happy to consider those.

One item that we are keenly aware of is the recent increase in beaver activity along the North Branch. Beaver dam construction not only interferes with river navigation, but also causes flooding in the surrounding area and increased sediment load in the river itself. This additional sediment load poses a threat to our trout population since good gravel beds are needed for their spawning and reproduction. In addition to these concerns, there is the threat of property loss should impacted trees fall on cabins and surrounding structures. We have in place a process to identify and trap nuisance beavers whose activities are a concern. If you are experiencing beaver issues near you that you find concerning, please let us know.

Since our last communication, the Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation has lent its financial support to other worthy groups whose work is benefiting our river ecosystem. In recent months, donations have been made to promote the efforts of Cedars for the Au Sable, Headwaters Land Conservancy, and Huron Pine's Kirtland's Warbler Alliance to name just three. In addition, our ongoing support of a project to map the North Branch continues. This multi-year project will provide us valuable information which we can use in our efforts to protect spawning trout, enhance in-stream structure, and generally improve the overall health and productivity of our river, its trout, and the invertebrates upon which they rely for their food source.

In this newsletter, we have assembled a nice variety of articles which we hope you will find informative, helpful, and even entertaining. So, find a comfortable spot to sit for a spell, and enjoy reading what has been happening along your North Branch. Until next time, thank you for your support, and my very best wishes to you.



Up North Wow! by Glen Eberly

What is it about “Up North” that stirs our blood, captures our imagination, and brings us back trip after trip? What is it that makes the memories that frequently flood our minds while we tend to life's demands, usually elsewhere?

For me it's simple. It is a series of Up North Wows! They vary by resident and visitor alike, but we all experience them and they are the mortar that binds us to these magical woods and waters we have come to love so much.

I have been experiencing Up North Wows for over 35 years. Let me share with you my first three very powerful Up North Wows.

First, my love of fly fishing for trout brought me to this anglers' paradise and produced my first Up North Wow. That, my friends, was the splashy rise of a brilliantly colored hefty brook trout to a luckily and gently placed dry fly. Fish on, Wow! This Up North Wow brings anglers from around the globe to our classic trout waters to experience their own Wows.



My second Wow rises from our uplands. It is a crisp October day. The brilliance of a north woods autumn stirs the soul. The little setter is locked in a solid point with nostrils flaring and body quivering at the cautious edge of an invisible cloud of scent. Two hunters walk by the statue and the forest floor erupts in a flurry of leaves as a mature ruffed grouse bursts from beneath a blow down and heads for safer cover. That, my friends, is truly a double Wow! How many bird hunters have enjoyed the Wow presented by the flush of a grouse or woodcock in our magnificent upland coverts?



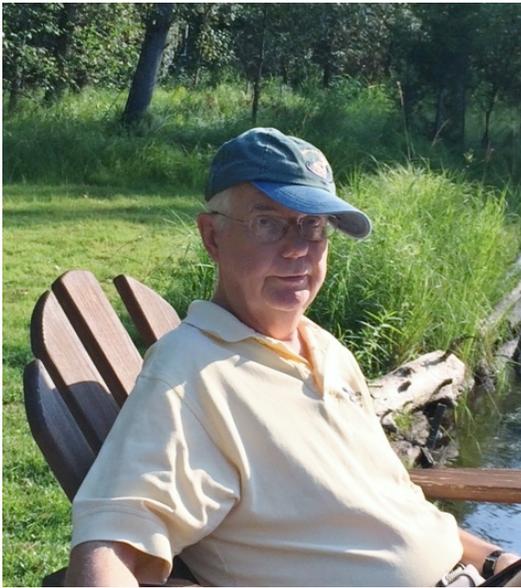
While my third Wow is more passive, it creates a response similar to Wows one and two. Wow three occurs on a spring day in late April while walking the south side of a hill forested with old ash or aspen. It happens at that exact moment when the brain receives images from the eyes and recognizes the shape in focus to be that of a morel. Wow! Now, don't move. Look the ground over carefully and let's find more.



A good morel hunt can produce over 50 Wows, a productive day on our streams can gift us with 24 Wows or more, while a grouse hunter is fortunate to experience 20 Wows on a day afield with friends and good dogs.

Wows are most powerful and I would like a psychologist to explain to me why the law of diminishing returns does not apply to our Up North Wows. I will never tire of any of my three Wows. What are the Up North Wows that wow you? I have at least another dozen that come to mind but I would like to hear of yours. I am probably missing many and one certainly cannot experience too many Up North Wows, now can one?

In Memory of Our Dear River Friend, Bill Ross



A gentle man, a scholar, a community man, a family man, a man of faith, and over it all, a river man. Bill absolutely loved the river, whether he was fishing in it, sitting near it, listening to it, sharing food and drink with family and friends, watching for wildlife, or reading on his porch..

And Bill was very willing and able to offer his thoughts and services to his community, whether it was in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he and Jan lived for many years, or up here on the North Branch. Bill was a long-time board member of the Foundation, as well as a past president. His quiet comments and suggestions, always given after some thought, were valued by all of us.

Thank you, Bill, for teaching us, by example, how to enjoy the peace of the river, and how we can protect it, too. You will be forever missed on the North Branch, but never forgotten. May God bless you and all of your family!

Mark Your Calendars for the Annual Dinner

Our annual dinner for Foundation supporters will be held Saturday, July 8 and once again, the food truck from North Bound Outfitters will be providing barbequed pork and turkey as well as the side dishes of baked beans and coleslaw. The Foundation will also provide diners with wine, beer, soft drinks and dessert. And the location is still the popular North Branch Outing Club.

When:	Saturday, July 8th Social Hour starting at 6pm, followed by Dinner at 7pm
Where:	North Branch Outing Club 6122 E. County Road 612, Lovells
Cost:	\$30/person
RSVP to:	Debi Anderson DebbieA20@aol.com or 219-242-1900

Web Site Improvements

We are working hard to improve the Foundation website (www.ausablenorthbranch.org) with more information and photos. We can now accept donations by credit cards and Pay Pal on the web site; we have expanded the number of useful links and have some great new photographs that were sent in by our supporters.

However, we can always use more photos, stories or information. We will be recognizing photo contributors at the Annual Dinner. If there is anything you would like to share, including comments and suggestions, please send them to robertweed70@yahoo.com or use the Contact section on the Home Page.

Introducing an Addition to the Lovells Township Grounds

by Gary Neumann, Lovells Township Supervisor

Last fall the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited (TU), located in Saginaw, MI, inquired about the possibility of erecting a memorial to Arthur C. Neumann, a founding father of TU, on our township grounds. Their proposal was to erect a five by eight foot memorial, made of natural river rock with a sandstone cap, on the north end of our township's property. The monument would be adjacent to the existing museum and school house. Their proposal included assurances that, if allowed by the township, all costs of construction, maintenance and insurance of the memorial would be the responsibility of TU. The Lovells Township Historical Society was in favor of proposal because of the added visibility the monument would bring to the museum and school house. At the November 2016 meeting of the Lovells Township Board TU's proposal to construct the memorial on our grounds was approved and construction commenced shortly thereafter. By mid-April 2017 construction was complete and on the last Saturday of this past April the monument was dedicated. The keynote speaker at the dedication was Mr. Chris Wood, President and CEO of TU.

By any measure the monument is both eye pleasing and eye catching! It is appropriate recognition of Art Neumann's lifetime of leadership in coldwater conservation and the substantial contributions he made to TU. I highly recommend that you stop by the township grounds and view this new addition. Should you arrive between 11 AM and 4 PM on a Friday or Saturday, you will also be able to visit the Lovells Museum of Fly Fishing History. This years' exhibit features Art and includes a very realistic re-creation of his Wanigas Rod Company shop which served fly fishers for over forty years.



Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation

www.ausablenorthbranch.org

Here is my (our) contribution to support the Foundation:

Name: _____

Contribution Amount: _____

Address: _____

In Memory/Honor of: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return to:

Au Sable North Branch Area Foundation - c/o Marjrie Warner - PO Box 2524, Grayling, MI 49738

Au Sable North Branch Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)3 not for profit.

River Keeper Program Update by Eric Bankhead

The 8TH season of River Keeping has begun. Nineteen of your neighbors volunteer their time to keep the river enjoyable for all of us. They observe and report issues that may be detrimental to the River. From Large Woody Debris (LWD) movement, wind or beaver tree falls blocking safe passage, invasive plants, septic or sewage leaks, unpermitted construction, zoning issues, excessive trash, to access site issues.

Ken Reed will be doing river maintenance this season. he's already been on the river three times to move LWD that was creating unsafe passage. All river maintenance is paid for by your donations. A huge Thank You! to you, our supporters, and to the River Keepers for showing such a sincere concern for the river.

See our web site AuSableNorthBranch.org, 'River Keeper Program' page for contact information on your Reach and once again, thank you for your dedication to the North Branch!

Beavers on the North Branch ... Again by Eric Bankhead

We have seen an increase in beaver activity on the North Branch, in the areas near Nash Camp, Williams'/Papp's (between Big Creek confluence and Morley Access), and in the Island Street neighborhood. The main reason is lack of trapping during the winter season. The price of pelts are at a low, thus the lack of trapping. So, do what I do and wrap chicken wire or metal fencing around the bottom 2-3 feet of the trees you want to keep. Beavers prefer Poplar, Birch, and Tag Alder stands, however I have seen them down Hawthorn, Crab Apple, and Maple. They stay away from evergreens normally.

I did have a Poplar dropped on our cabin a few years ago, luckily only minor damage.

You can obtain a 'Nuisance Permit' from the DNR, a C.O. will come to look for active signs, and activity must be seen on your property for a permit to be granted. The Foundation has in the past and will continue to assist with the cost of trapping as it's not just one property owner's issue but one for the River.

If beavers have dropped trees already, do what I do, make a North Branch Beaver Chewed Lamp or Bookends. Both of these items will be available at the Silent Auction during *BEAVER, BEER, and BANJO* on July 22nd at the Riverside Tavern in Lovells.



Newsletter Changes

As you have already noticed, we are now mailing the newsletter in envelopes to minimize handling damage. Included on the envelope, is a date next to your name that indicates the date of the last donation received from you. We appreciate your support and hope this information is useful to you. We are also working hard to ensure that you find the newsletter interesting and useful so if you have any articles, ideas, comments or suggestions, please send them to Bob Weed: robertweed70@yahoo.com

A BIG Thank You to Our Supporters!

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ASNBAF Board Meetings April - October
 2nd Saturday of each month Lovells Township Hall
 9am-11am

ASNBAF Dinner
 July 8, North Branch Outing Club 6pm-9pm

Beaver, Beer & Banjo
 July 22, Lovells Tavern 6pm-9pm

Lovells Bridge Walk
 August 19, Lovells Twp. 8am-4pm

ASNBAF Annual Meeting
 September 2, Lovells Township Hall 9am-noon

AuSable River Cleanup (sponsored by Anglers of the AuSable) September 9, 9am-3pm

Lovells Historical Society; Nash Camp Tour
 September 17, 1pm-4pm

Mission Statement: To preserve, protect and enhance the natural endowments of the watershed of the North Branch of the Au Sable River for the benefit of wild fish and game and public enjoyment and appreciation.

