



Summer 2005 NEWS

THE JOURNAL OF VOYAGEURS NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION

Celebrating 40 Years in the Footsteps of a Great Man

On November 15, 2004, Voyageurs National Park Association (VNPA) lost a true friend and supporter, former Minnesota Governor Elmer L. Andersen, who was instrumental in the formation of VNPA and the subsequent creation of Voyageurs National Park.



Elmer L. Andersen
*Minnesota Historical Society
Photographer: Jerome Liebling*

Elmer Andersen served the people of the State of Minnesota for decades as a State Senator; Governor; leading philanthropist; member of the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents; member on the board of directors for several organizations, including the Minnesota Historical Society and the Child Welfare League of Minnesota; and owner and leader of one of the State's

largest companies, H.B. Fuller Company.

Within weeks of taking office as Governor in 1961, Elmer Andersen began working on a plan to establish a national park on the Kabetogama Peninsula. Drawing on efforts previously led by the head of the Minnesota Parks Division, U.W. Hella, Andersen started a campaign to bring officials from the National Park Service to visit Kabetogama. On one of these trips, Governor Andersen, Sigurd Olson, and others toured the area that would become the Park with Conrad Wirth, Director of the Park Service. At the end of the trip, the Director not only agreed with the conclusion that the area should be saved as a national park, but also with Sigurd Olson's choice of a name for the Park: Voyageurs.

In 1964, after leaving the Governor's office, Andersen persuaded Martin

Kellogg (who was serving on the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce's tourism study committee) to organize a citizen's group to advocate for the creation of Voyageurs National Park. Kellogg, Judge Edwin P. Chapman, Tom Savage, and Lloyd Brandt were the first officers of VNPA when it was incorporated on May 5, 1965.

Elmer Andersen's work on behalf of the Park did not end with the formation of VNPA. He continued to advocate for the creation of the Park and remained a loyal supporter of VNPA throughout his life. Many have called Andersen the "father of Voyageurs National Park," for it was the efforts of Andersen, VNPA, and others that led to the establishment of Voyageurs National Park in 1975.

As VNPA enters its 40th year as an organization and Voyageurs National Park celebrates its 30th year as part of the National Park Service, we remember former Governor Andersen and all that he did for us and for the future generations that are able to experience the wonders of the Kabetogama Peninsula and its surrounding lakes. VNPA is proud of its long tradition of protecting and promoting the natural, recreational, and historical resources of Voyageurs National Park, and we are thankful for the dedicated men and women who had the vision to form this organization 40 years ago, as well as the many others who have served it and the Park so well since.

Watch for events celebrating our 40th year, including a fall celebration in the Park, and an anniversary celebration at our annual meeting in February 2006. We'll also be highlighting some of the VNPA and Voyageurs National Park history in our upcoming newsletters.

2005 marks the

*40th Anniversary of
Voyageurs National Park
Association*

*30th Anniversary of
Voyageurs National Park*

*10th Anniversary of
Friends of Voyageurs National Park*

¹ Voyageur Country, p. 106, Robert Treur, University of Minnesota Press, 1979.

Editor's note:

Jim Dier

The Long and Winding Trail

40 years ago, a group of visionary leaders formed Voyageurs National Park Association. The lofty purpose of this new organization was no less than the establishment of a national park in northern Minnesota to preserve the area where, in the late 1700s and early 1800s, French-Canadian voyageurs paddled canoes transporting furs along the trade routes in the Rainy Lake region.

During the ten years after VNPA was formed, the trail to create this national park would indeed be long and winding. If not for the hard work and perseverance of these visionary leaders and this organization, Voyageurs National Park would not have been established.

As we celebrate our 40th anniversary this year, we continue down this long and winding trail. Around every bend, we face new challenges and new opportunities. During her first six months leading the VNPA, Executive Director Cory MacNulty has been very busy traveling this winding trail through trips to the Park, committee and board meetings, political engagements, networking, writing letters, orienting new board members, training new interns, moving the office, and much more. And with the recent transfer of Barb West, the Park's superintendent for the last 10 years, we are at once excited and anxious about what awaits us around the next bend.

Let us take some time to reflect on how far we have come during the past 40 years, and let us renew our commitment to protect and promote this unique and enchanting wilderness. While it is true we have come a long way, the trail is still longer – and still winding. With your support, we will continue to do all we can to ensure that the vision of Voyageurs National Park endures.

VNPA Makes Park Trail Maintenance Initiative Possible

Limited budgets have always forced national parks to make difficult decisions about where to focus resources to meet an array of demands and responsibilities. However, in recent years, significant budget shortfalls throughout the Park system have caused the strain to be felt even more strongly. Voyageurs National Park (VNP) has been no exception. To help ease this burden for Voyageurs, VNPA recently donated \$8,000 to help the Park hire an employee to do trail maintenance work on hiking, skiing, and snowshoe trails this summer.

Voyageurs has over 50 miles of trails available for backpacking, hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing, as well as short overland portage trails for snowmobiling. Over time, through lack of use, overuse, or simple neglect, trails can become overgrown, eroded, and hazardous. Removing fallen trees and clearing brush keeps trails clear, usable, and accessible for Park visitors.

Bruce Barrett, Namakan District foreman for Voyageurs, said the Park has never had funds available to invest in a full trail maintenance crew to adequately address annual upkeep maintenance, let alone any type of preventive maintenance. Instead they have had to choose a few sections of trail to focus on each year and hope that donor and volunteer efforts can supplement at least some of the

shortfall. In 2005, however, VNP was not able to designate any base budget funding for trail maintenance in the Park.

The \$8,000 donation by VNPA is allowing the Park to hire Steven Schultz, a native of International Falls, for ten weeks this summer. Schultz is currently finishing a degree in wilderness management and outdoor recreation planning with a minor in geography, and also has a degree in criminal justice. The Park is supplementing the VNPA donation with funds to keep Schultz on for an additional four weeks for a total of fourteen weeks of work. Although VNPA is committed to working with Voyageurs to develop a long-term solution to ensure adequate trail maintenance for the Park, this donation provides important short-term assistance.

Along with Park employee Russell Waldorf, Schultz will focus on removing windfall from all Park hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing trails. A significant portion of their efforts will go into clearing brush and fallen trees from the main portion of the Kab-Ash Trail.

Last year, VNPA also donated \$8,000 to help with maintenance of the Kab-Ash Trail. This work was completed by a crew from the Minnesota Conservation Corps.

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“Whatever my own future, I know that if I keep the lob pines in my mind’s eye, I will stay on course, and when I hear the wild, free call of a loon, I’ll know I’m in paradise.”

Elmer Andersen describing what the natural wonders of Voyageurs National park meant to him. August 21, 1991 at the 20th Anniversary celebration of the Park’s authorization.

Bald Eagle Nesting Areas in Voyageurs National Park

Bald eagles are the majestic symbol of our country, and what better place to find them than in our national parks.

According to a recent Voyageurs National Park news release, VNP biologists conducting annual aerial surveys counted 63 bald eagle nests within Park boundaries during the month of April. At 31 of these sites, adult pairs were observed, and 29 of these pairs were actively involved in incubating. This is great news for the eagles as well as the Park since the observations suggest the highest number of nesting pairs in the Park since surveying began in 1992.

As part of VNP’s management policy, areas within 1/4 mile of active bald eagle sites are temporarily closed to the public during critical nesting periods, which typically run from April through mid-August, when the young leave their nests. When the nesting season is over, the closed areas are reopened for visitor use.

This year, the Park will also be discouraging both motorized and non-motorized boaters from approaching or stopping within 200 meters of bald eagle nesting sites. Research conducted over the past two years has suggested that watercraft activity near nesting sites may have a

detrimental effect on breeding success. The nesting activities are especially sensitive to disruptive activity during May and June. This is the time when eggs are being incubated and newly-hatched eaglets are adjusting to their new environment.

Areas temporarily affected by the closures include four of the Park’s 225 developed visitor use sites and six undeveloped areas. Information about the closures can be found on the VNP website. (www.nps.gov/voya)

As you enjoy the beauty of Voyageurs National Park this summer, please remember to give the bald eagles some room to grow and thrive in their summer homes. Pack a good pair of binoculars and bring your telephoto lens so you may enjoy these nesting sites at a distance. This is a great way to share this wonderful national park with our honored national symbol.



Farewell to Barbara West

On May 20, 2005, Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Barbara West left her post at the Park, where she had served for ten years, to assume the role of Superintendent of Chaco Culture National Historic Park in New Mexico. During her tenure, Barb successfully maneuvered her way through the ongoing, sometimes contentious debate surrounding the Park. She has been described as embattled, controversial, and blunt, but also politically savvy, respectful, and patient. It is a tribute to Barb's talent and balance as a National Park leader that both sides have at times claimed that she was favoring the interests of the other.

Coming into the position of superintendent at VNP in 1995, Barb was met with a range of issues, including: restrictions on motorized vehicles (especially jet skis, snowmobiles, and off-road vehicles); jurisdiction over waters within the Park boundaries; disputes over the land acquisition program;

disagreements over wilderness designation for the Kabetogama peninsula; and frustration with the pace of federal funding for Park development.

Barb was integral to a number of efforts establishing the long-term preservation of the solitude and serenity found in VNP. Barb oversaw VNP's role in working with the International Joint Commission to institute new water management initiatives in 2000 regulating the Namakan and Rainy Reservoirs in the Park. The initiatives were undertaken to benefit wildlife, fisheries, and area resorts. Barb was also responsible for directing (and wrangling over) the creation of the Park's new General Management Plan. Barb's greatest accomplishment at VNP, though, was probably her success in consistently dealing evenhandedly with the many conflicts surrounding the Park.



Congresswoman McCollum presents a United States flag to Barbara West

On May 9th, members from Voyageurs National Park Association, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, The Wilderness Society, National Park Conservation Association, and the Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League met at the University Club in St. Paul to honor Barb for her 10 years of stewardship. Leaders from each organization said a few words about Barb's positive impact on the Park and thanked her for her dedication and leadership.

Also in attendance were Congresswoman Betty McCollum and representatives from the offices of Senator Coleman and Congressman Sabo. Congresswoman McCollum read a commendation, which was entered into the congressional record (see inset) and presented Barb with a United States flag that had been flown at the capitol.

The members of Voyageurs National Park Association would like to extend a special note of thanks to Barb. It's true that we haven't agreed on every issue, but in the end, the protection of this unique national treasure was the overriding goal we shared. It will be hard to find another superintendent with the fortitude and courage to walk that fine line between contention and compromise.

Best wishes to you, Barb.

Congressional Statement Commending Voyageurs National Park Superintendent Barbara West

MS McCULLOM: Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend Barbara West, the superintendent of Voyageurs National Park, as she prepares to leave Minnesota for America's southwest. I thank her for her hard work and know that she will be missed, not only as one who has dedicated her life to preserving our nation's natural treasures, but as a friend.

Voyageurs National Park is one of the crown jewels in our national park system. It contains four large lakes covering forty percent of the park with a series of beautiful islands for one to explore. Voyageurs was named for the French-Canadian canoemen who traveled these waters in their birch-bark canoes. The park's waterways were an important stretch of the "voyageurs' highway" from the Great Lakes into the interior of the western United States and Canada.

With grace and confidence, Superintendent West has done an outstanding job of overseeing and protecting this area so future generations can enjoy its history and beauty. Minnesotans and visitors to our state have benefited from her stewardship of the park and her dedication to community and our natural resources.

Superintendent West, thank you for your years of service. I, along with many who treasure and love our national parks, wish you the very best in your new assignment at the Chaco Culture National Historic Park in New Mexico.

Concerns in the Search for a New Superintendent

On May 23rd, the National Park Service (NPS) ended its open application period for the next superintendent of Voyageurs National Park. The position was recently left vacant by Barb West who departed to become the Superintendent of Chaco Culture National Historic Park. The decision on who becomes the next superintendent could be the single most important factor affecting Voyageurs National Park over the next decade. The superintendent is an important leadership position involving a significant amount of discretion over setting and interpreting Park policies and fairly broad authority over most aspects of Park management. The Voyageurs National Park Association is paying close attention to the selection process for this position.

The Midwest Regional Office of the NPS is conducting the hiring process for the superintendent position following competitive hiring procedures as required by federal regulations. Applications for the

position were accepted between April 22nd and May 23rd. Applications are being evaluated to determine the most highly qualified candidates who will subsequently be referred to Midwest Regional Director, Ernest Quintana, for further consideration. It is expected that a new superintendent for the Park will be hired by the end of this summer.

Before a selection is made, however, Regional Director Quintana will be visiting International Falls to tour Voyageurs National Park and meet with Park stakeholders to discuss the superintendent selection and future Park management. Quintana's visit, scheduled for July 12th, was requested by Senator Coleman and Congressman Kennedy. The request was made in response to an appeal by International Falls and Koochiching County politicians for an opportunity to provide input on the selection of the new superintendent. Quintana will be meeting with local officials and select community members in International Falls. He extended an invitation to

VNPA to coordinate a separate meeting with other Park stakeholders in an attempt to generate balanced input.

VNPA supports Regional Director Quintana in his efforts to listen to all parties invested in Voyageurs National Park in order to work toward a more positive and collaborative future for the Park. However, VNPA has joined with the National Parks Conservation Association, the Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, Minnesota Division of the Izaak Walton League of America, The Wilderness Society, and the Minnesota chapter of REP America (Republicans for Environmental Protection) to express our concerns regarding the timing and structure of the July 12th meetings.

The NPS hiring process is guided by regulations set forth in the Hatch Act, therefore selection of park service employees should be an internal, non-political process. The Hatch Act codifies congressional intent to eliminate the influence of state, local, and national politics upon the competitive service hiring process. It generally prohibits the NPS from considering recommendations made by members of congress regarding applicants for competitive service jobs. We believe that by initiating meetings between the NPS and a limited number of elected officials to discuss the selection of the next Park superintendent, our elected officials are violating, at least, the spirit of the Hatch Act.

While we look forward to the opportunity to meet with Regional Director Quintana, we believe any stakeholder meetings relating to the Park would be more appropriate and productive once a new superintendent is in place. That person can then hear from all Park stakeholders, rather than a select few, and adequately focus on understanding the various issues facing the Park.



Barbara West with Kate Miller, Acting Superintendent of Voyageurs National Park, and Ann Ladd, President of VNPA

Until the selection process is complete, the acting superintendent of Voyageurs National Park is Kate Miller, Deputy Superintendent of the Park. Miller has extensive experience providing leadership and direction to a broad spectrum of programs involving historical preservation, environmental and wilderness education, ecological research, public education, and citizen involvement. During her tenure with the National Park Service, Miller also directed the National Park Service history program in Alaska, and held the positions of Chief, Division of Resources Education at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and Superintendent at Effigy Mounds National Monument.

2005 Goals: We are on our way!

In preparation for a productive year, the VNPA board of directors met with Executive Director Cory MacNulty in January to develop an annual plan for 2005. The overarching goal of the day was to develop a positive, proactive plan with achievable goals and objectives.

Six priorities were identified, three focusing on developing the organization and three focusing on our mission. Organizational priorities include increasing our membership, growing and diversifying our funding base, and building board effectiveness and participation. Program priorities consist of developing programs and focusing on issues with broad stakeholder appeal; strengthening relationships with the Park, the regional community, and politicians; and raising awareness of Voyageurs National Park and VNPA.

To build on our three program objectives, in 2005 we are working to:

- ◆ Complete VNP recreational map series
- ◆ Promote the Park as a birding destination through sponsorship of the Birders' Rendezvous and nominating the Park as an important bird area with Minnesota Audubon
- ◆ Promote VNPA's 40th and VNP's 30th anniversaries
- ◆ Assist the Park in analyzing its overnight permit data
- ◆ Assist with volunteer water quality monitoring on the Namakan Reservoir
- ◆ Provide financial support to the Park for: maintenance of hiking, skiing and snowshoeing trails, printing of the Rendezvous newspaper, and development of the Junior Ranger Program
- ◆ Strengthen relationships with Park employees and groups around the Park
- ◆ Develop relationships with key politicians.

We are well on our way to achieving several goals in our annual plan. With the announcement of Barb West's departure, however, we were reminded of the importance of maintaining flexibility in our goals in order to respond to shifting needs of the Park. As we have in the past, VNPA is playing a critical role in monitoring threats to the Park's resources and building coalitions of individuals and organizations to support the Park in 2005.

Experienced Interns Join the VNPA Team

Brooke Hanson recently finished a graduate certificate in non-profit management at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, where she focused on finance and fundraising. This fall she is beginning a fellowship at Indiana University to complete a Master's degree in public affairs. Prior to this, Brooke graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison. For the past four and a half years, she has been doing program and development work at a human services non-profit organization; and for the past year and a half she has been a board member for the Minnesota Chapter of the Supervised Visitation Network. Through the summer Brooke will be working with VNPA on membership and fundraising activities. Projects Brooke will be working on include increasing membership and seeking out additional funding and grant opportunities for VNPA.

Michael Banker is currently a graduate student at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities working toward a Master's degree in rhetoric, with a specialty in environmental rhetoric. Prior to this, Michael graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison and then moved to California, where he spent some years in Los Angeles working on television sitcoms and documentaries. For the last few years he lived in San Francisco doing marketing for a technology company. Michael will be working with VNPA through the summer on communication efforts to increase public awareness of and involvement with Voyageurs National Park and VNPA. Projects Michael will be working on include developing website and communication materials, helping to promote VNPA's 40th anniversary, and increasing VNPA's public relations initiatives.

VNPA Recognizes Board Member Service

On February 19, 2005, VNPA members, friends, and the board of directors gathered at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge to hold the annual members meeting. Each year, members help shape the organization through their votes for the board of directors.

Before voting for new members, VNPA recognized the contributions of board members John Holmquist, Ken Kadash, Jim Martineau, John Pastor, and Irene Serr, who completed their terms in 2004. Special thanks was given to Jim Martineau for his role in leading the board as chair, to Ken Kadash for sharing his expertise with us as our financial manager, to John Holmquist for taking on the monumental task of editing the VNPA journal for many years and to Irene Serr for her long term support. John Holmquist continues to play an active role on the communications committee and John Pastor will remain a scientific advisor for the organization.

Special recognition was also given to Don Nightingale, current chair of the board of directors, for filling the position of interim executive director in the transition before hiring Cory MacNulty. Through Don's generosity and leadership, VNPA strengthened relationships with the Park and continued to build its programs in 2004.

Two New Board Members Join VNPA

VNPA members voted to add two new directors to the organization's Board, Ryan Johnson and Charlie Klein.



Charlie Klein is VNPA's new volunteer finance manager and board member, serving on the finance committee. VNPA interested Charlie because he saw it as an opportunity to become involved with something that promoted his enthusiasm for the outdoors, especially his interest, as

he put it, in the "gem that is northern Minnesota." He explained, "I prefer my Old Town and my Retriever over my Camry and my Dell." Charlie's aim is to contribute to the strength and clarity of VNPA's financial operations.

Charlie is the accounting manager for Volunteers of America. He graduated with a BA in accounting from St. John's University in 1998 and is both a Certified Public Accountant and a Certified Managerial Accountant.

Ryan Johnson is a new member of the VNPA Board and is serving as secretary. Ryan joined VNPA to contribute to the protection of our environment in Minnesota. He has enjoyed family trips to Voyageurs National Park where he developed a personal connection to the lake country.

Ryan is an attorney at Fredrikson & Byron whose practice focuses on mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, strategic alliances, and general tax and business planning. Ryan graduated summa cum laude with a BA from Gustavus Adolphus College and received his JD from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1999. He serves on the board of the Minneapolis/St. Paul chapter of the Independent Feature Project.



Voyageurs National Park has many Friends

Voyageurs National Park relies on a number of extraordinary people to fulfill its mission. Some of the most dedicated citizens in the region around the Park joined 10 years ago to form the Friends of Voyageurs National Park, a nonprofit organization based in International Falls. Their mission is to sponsor outreach that supports natural, historical and educational activities in VNP. For the past decade, the Friends of VNP have contributed funding and volunteer hours toward trail maintenance and research in the Park, as well as for projects that protect the environment and add to visitor enjoyment.

Last fall, VNPA Executive Director Cory MacNulty met with the Friends of VNP board to discuss ways that VNPA and the Friends of VNP could work more collaboratively toward shared goals. Our first step is increased communication between the groups by sharing each organization's accomplishments and goals in our respective newsletters. This year we are also planning ways to jointly celebrate the 10th anniversary of Friends of VNP, the 30th anniversary of Voyageurs National Park, and the 40th anniversary of VNPA. We kicked off the year's collaborative efforts during National Park Week on April 23rd at the Rainy Lake Visitor Center and at the Midwest Mountaineering Spring Outdoor Adventure Expo in Minneapolis.

Friends of VNP is also celebrating their 10th year by educating Park visitors about the hazards of lead fishing tackle and distributing lead free tackle. They will be distributing lead free tackle at Park boat launches July 9-10 and at Park visitor centers throughout the summer. Friends of VNP contributed \$3,000 to Park interpretive programs in 2005 and held their annual garage sale on June 24-25 to raise funds to support Voyageurs National Park in 2006.

To help distribute lead free tackle in the Park July 9-10, contact Jo Kallemeyn at 218-286-5302.

Voyageurs National Park can never have too many friends.

Voyageurs National Park Association

Protecting and promoting the
natural, recreational and historic
resources of
Voyageurs National Park

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~Please note new address

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Ann Ladd
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Kurt Lysne
Donald Nightingale
Laura Oberst
John Roth
Kristin Sankovitz

Volunteer!

The help of Voyageurs National Park Association members is urgently needed. Be a part of the 40th Anniversary Celebration of VNPA by getting directly involved with VNPA's efforts to fulfill its mission of protecting Voyageurs National Park.

VOLUNTEER! Volunteers at VNPA can actively participate in the committee of their choice to help the organization more effectively accomplish its goals. CHOOSE your area of expertise and interest and be a part of the revitalization of Voyageurs National Park Association. Do the layout for the newsletter. Write an article. Contact legislators. Promote and be a presence for VNPA at various events to help increase membership. Or visit Voyageurs National Park to participate in and help with activities in the Park.

The following committees meet on a regular basis and make monthly reports to the Executive Committee.

Communications
Development
Events
Finance
Membership
Policy

Sign up for the committee of your choice: Call or e-mail Lee Barthel, co-chair events committee, at 612-872-7516 or lwgeb@scc.net or call Cory MacNulty directly at the VNPA office: 612-333-5424.

Don't Forget to Renew Your Membership!

Every member is vital to the work of the VNPA. If you have already renewed ... thank You! If you have not yet renewed, please send in your contribution today – just fill out the membership form included with the return envelope or contribute online at www.voyageurs.org. You can also help us increase our membership by encouraging your friends to support VNPA and by giving a gift membership to someone you know.

Your continued support helps assure a wild, wonderful Voyageurs National Park into the future.

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