



# TIMBERLINES

W. J. Breckenridge Chapter  
Izaak Walton League  
June 2022

[www.breckenridgeikes.org](http://www.breckenridgeikes.org)



## COMING EVENTS

### JUNE 2022

- 14 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 28 Social/Educational meeting 7:30 pm  
Advancing Conservation –  
Sen. Chris Eaton

### JULY 2022

- 12 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 26 Social/Educational meeting 7:30 pm  
TBD

### AUGUST 2022

- 9 Board of Directors Meeting 7 pm
- 23 Social/Educational meeting 7:30 pm  
TBD

**Social Educational Meeting:  
Tues. June 28, 7:30 PM  
Senator Chris Eaton**



Join us at the Chapter House for our monthly Social/Education meeting open to the public. Sen. Chris Eaton represented District 40 for a dozen years. She sits on the Environment and Natural Resources Finance Committee and has authored

many bills dealing with the environment. She also is on the Health and Human Services Finance and Policy Committee where her background as an R.N.

serves her well. We have asked Sen. Eaton to speak about her years representing us at the Legislature, especially focusing on conservation legislation. We've also asked for her advice on ways to better advance conservation legislation in the future, especially with divided government. Join us afterward for socialization and treats.

### Letter from a Fellow Ike

The following letter appeared in the *Star Tribune* on Saturday, June 4, 2022

According to my last PolyMet annual report, PolyMet was incorporated in British Columbia, Canada. PolyMet (one word) in Canada is 100% owner of Poly Met (two words), which has an office in St. Paul. Glencore AG, which owns a majority of PolyMet, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Glencore PLC ("Glencore to pay \$1.1B in bribery case," May 26).

Before PolyMet/Poly Met mines a ton of ore, we are faced with a level of corporate complexity that pretty much guarantees that no one in the boardroom of Glencore PLC is ever going to have to take a shovel and clean up any mess left behind by Glencore PLC, Glencore AG, PolyMet or Poly Met.

As stockholders, my wife and I are invited to PolyMet's annual meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, on June 15, 2022. That means we would have to drive at least 1,800 miles to have input on a mine 15 miles from our house. The mining industry has created a corporate maze. The state of Minnesota is not prepared for the challenge.

BOB TAMMEN, Soudan, Minn.

## Board of Directors Meeting Highlights: May 24, 2022

**Pancake breakfast** was cancelled. Steve made arrangements for the griddle rental down payment to be good through December.

### **Social/Educational meetings**

June 28 – Senator Chris Eaton

July 26 – TBD

August 23 – TBD

### **Chapter House Rentals**

Rentals are full through summer with graduations & weddings. Increased rates for Rentals, Pancake Breakfast and Member Rentals have been the same for years and are being reviewed for 2023.

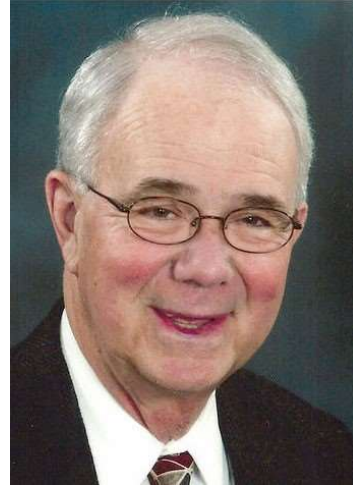
### **Insurance Subcommittee**

The insurance subcommittee presented a list of potential liability risks we face and the Board agreed to work on a plan to mitigate them. The Board of Directors voted to purchase a Director's and Officer's insurance policy as our Minnesota State Division, other chapters and our own subcommittee have recommended.



Prairie Smoke seen along the bluebird trail our chapter maintains in Oxbow Park

## In Memory of Grant Merritt



Grant Merritt (1934–2022), a longtime Breckenridge Chapter member and delegate to state conventions, one of the lions of a bygone era, died May 18 at age 88. He came on the scene as a major player in matters environmental in the 1970's and 80's when all things were possible. It was

Minnesota's second progressive era, and one needs only look at the raft of progressive legislation enacted then. Merritt devoted a great deal of his energy, during his long and productive life, to saving the planet from wanton destruction. In addition to serving as head of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency from 1971-1975, Grant also served on the first board of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Council and was Minnesota's representative on the Great Lakes Water Quality Board. He was an attorney in the areas of environmental law, transportation and government relations for more than 50 years. His complete life story is captured in his memoir, which he presented at one the Chapter's meetings.

Grant is survived by his wife of 64 years Marilyn, and his two daughters Linda and Carolyn. He was preceded in death by his son Steve. A celebration of life will be held on Tuesday, June 14 at Town and Country Club, 300 N Mississippi River Blvd. in St. Paul from 1-4 pm with Service at 1 pm. In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota or your favorite environmental cause.

## Record High River Level Set at Chapter House Riverbank

The Mississippi River, as it passed our Chapter House in Brooklyn Park, crested at nearly 13 feet May 18, an all-time high for that date. That was also expressed as 49,000 cubic feet per second, three times the median daily flow on that date for the past 89 years.

Records are made to be broken and the law of averages usually scatters records like this across the timeline. But they seem to be stacking up lately driven by both climate change and some agricultural practices. Watersheds that used to absorb more precipitation and release it downstream gradually have been engineered to get rid of the water as fast as possible by drain tiling increasingly more farmland dedicated increasingly more to row crops.



Banfill Island as seen three days before the crest.



Our children will hold us responsible if we don't care for their planet

It is well known that this quick runoff increases stream and riverbank erosion and downstream sedimentation (Lake Pepin is becoming shallower every year) as well as loading the runoff with excess nutrients causing algal blooms in lakes and the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico. The Izaak Walton League sponsors the Upper Mississippi River Initiative (UMRI) attempting to deal with these issues by working with farmers and watersheds to learn from them and to share best practices.

*Reported by Tim Johnson*

## Opinion: Federal, State and World 30-30 Land Conservation

Our President and MN Governor have stated support for our share of the World's nations' plan to save 30% of the World as Conservation-Biodiversity areas by 2030. This plan would help to halt global climate change through carbon sinks (mostly forests) and depredation of threatened and endangered species. Inadvertently it would also improve the lives of humans.

Many of our most prominent environmental groups are behind this movement although according to a *Star Tribune* report the program is not really off the ground yet and may never be. Immediately political and economic opponents seem to be absolutely opposed. I can see why, yet believe they are primarily wrong. Politicians are always squawking about things like "Federal Land Grab, no more use of our lands, threat to Minnesotans' way of life, we don't want to take productive farmland out of protection, we need to eat", etc.

Some of these arguments are easy to refute:

- **"Productive farmland, we need to eat"**. Stop to realize that much of our agricultural products are sold for profit overseas to countries that if they were not overpopulated could feed themselves. They should gradually work on their population problem.
- **Federal Land Grab**: Individuals and corporations would be expected to receive fair compensation and practices on private land that destroy the environment should expect to be curbed.

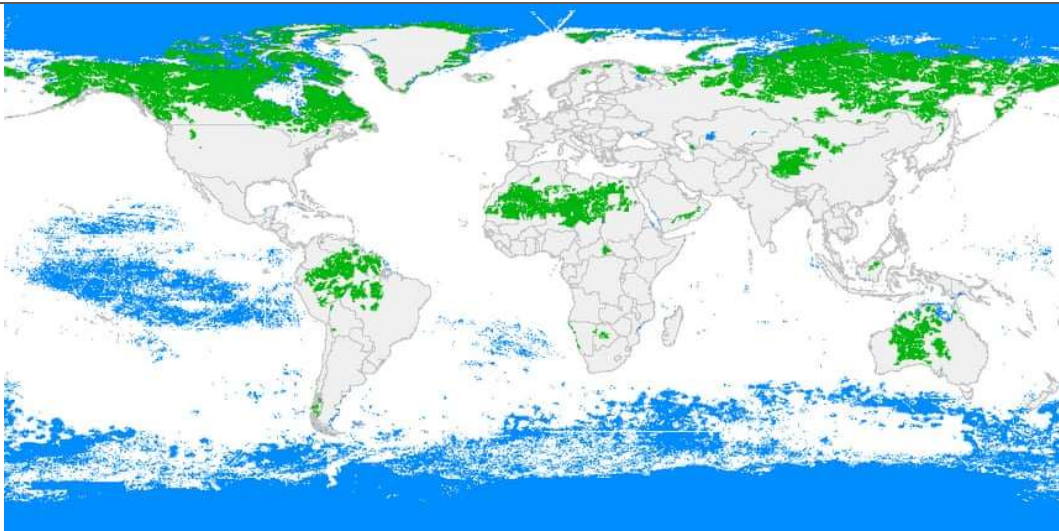
- **Threats to Minnesotan's way of life** To curb pollution, fight Global Warming, prevent species extinction and improve lives of humans, yes. The ways of life of many humans both state and nationwide need alterations.

Although I favor the 30-30 concept, personally I doubt we will ever be able to set aside a full 30% of the World's or our Nation's lands and waters for the benefit of natural diversity and prevention of climate change. Politicians, the greed of human nature and some spiritual groups will be forever against "stopping progress". To meet the goals in the World depends a lot on what kind of lands are proposed for setting aside. If they consider bare mountain tops, dry deserts and parts of the oceans that are too deep for many species they may make 30%. Some rich farmland, lakes and wetlands that have disappeared, lost prairies, etc. need to be rehabilitated to their original state to be included.

30-30 is a great concept. However, in the case of Minnesota it is said we are only about 7% protected. Perhaps 15% would be a more possible goal. Due to human nature and the split between political parties and Nations, I believe there is little hope for a full 30%. We are about 100 years too late! Also, our ever-expanding population will prohibit full implementation. Each person consumes, each person pollutes, and each person takes space!

*The more the merrier?*  
*Dick Brown*

Last of the wild. Remaining marine wilderness is shown in blue, terrestrial wilderness in green.



# 2022-23 Scholarship Recipients Update

By Jim Arnold

The Breckenridge Chapter scholarship committee recently selected six outstanding students for our Chapter's 24<sup>th</sup> year of students seeking careers in environmental areas.

**Willa Nagel** Is completing her junior year at the University of Minnesota. She recently changed her major from Environmental Education to Plant Science in Agroecology with a minor in soil science. Her career goal is to work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service as a soil Conservationist.



**Gabriel Drayton**, a graduate of Maple Grove High School, is completing his sophomore year at Northwestern University where he has changed his major to industrial engineering with a minor in Portuguese language. He plans for a career focus on conservation and environmental rights in South America, especially in the Amazon region.



**Sierra Hinkel**, a graduate of Andover High School, is completing her junior year at Stevens Point College where she is a forestry major and exploring minors within the college of natural resources. After college she expects to work with the DNR within the Midwest.



**Nicholas Mertens**, a graduate of Osseo High School recently completed his freshmen year at St. Benedicts/St.Johns. He is currently pursuing a double major track in environment Studies and Political Science with a minor in Hispanic Studies and hoping to practice environmental law in impoverished communities.



**Annika Hall** A graduate of Andover H.S. recently completed her freshman year at UW Madison. She is majoring in Environmental Studies through the Gaylord Nelson Institute, and tentatively plans to double major in Public Affairs.



**Claire Koch**, who will soon graduate from Champlin Park H.S., is also studying Bioproducts and Biosystems engineering at the University of Minnesota. She has taken advantage of PSEO in her junior and senior years. Her career goal is to be a renewable energy engineer.



*The Breckenridge Chapter has now awarded 100 scholarships totaling \$51,100 in the twenty-three 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's estate, Tom and Marilyn Breckenridge, John Breckenridge and Mary Ellen Vetter. 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 or the war in Ukraine.*

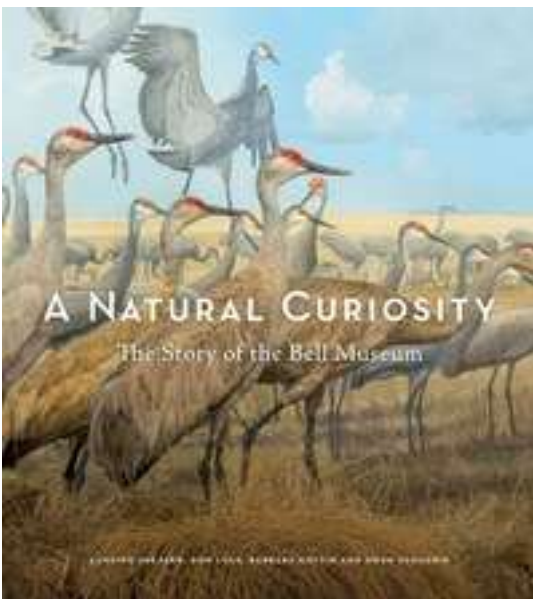
W. J. Breckenridge Chapter  
Izaak Walton League of America  
8816 West River Road  
Brooklyn Park MN 55444



If you would like to submit an article for the Timberlines, please send it to  
**Barbara Franklin at: [bbfrankli@gmail.com](mailto:bbfrankli@gmail.com)**  
**Deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> 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.

## History of the Bell Museum



A beautiful new book, *A Natural Curiosity: The Story of the Bell Museum* by Lansing Shepard, Don Luce, Barbara Coffin, and Gwen Schagrin, published in 2021 by the UofM press, is a richly illustrated tour of Minnesota's premier natural history museum after 150 years. Since its humble start in 1872 as a one-room cabinet of curiosities, the University of Minnesota's Bell Museum of natural history has become one of the state's most important cultural institutions. Drawing on a wealth of materials unearthed during the museum's recent move, this gorgeously illustrated book chronicles the remarkable discoveries and personalities that have made the Bell Museum what it is today.

The book also contains a wonderful chapter on our namesake, Breck, and his many contributions to the Bell Museum! It is also available from Amazon.