

You're Invited!

Join us for IRKPA's upcoming annual meeting and associated activities, which will take place at Keweenaw National Historical Park on July 25, 2020. It's bound to be fun and informative. More details to come!

Executive Director News

IRKPA's Personnel Committee received resumes from many qualified applicants during the recent call to become IRKPA's next Executive Director. Look for a profile of the selected candidate in the next edition of the *Wolf's Eye*!

Your 2020 Goals!

What are your personal goals for 2020 related to Isle Royale NP and Keweenaw NHP? Is there a hiking trail within Isle Royale's 165-mile network you're yearning to explore? Have you always wanted to visit the lighthouses on and around Isle Royale, or perhaps you have the goal of visiting ALL 21 of Keweenaw NHP's Heritage Sites? Maybe you're hoping to become an artist-in-residence or a park volunteer. Whatever it is, we're glad that our parks are on your radar! **Share your goal—maybe you'll inspire others!** We look forward to hearing from you at susanna@irkpa.org. Thank you!

The End of a Legacy

By Michael Ausema, East District Ranger

It was late October, and a deep chill hung in the morning air. As I backpacked toward Todd Harbor, I marveled at the perfect reflection of the birch and maple trees ablaze with color on the far side of Hatchet Lake.

I had been planning this final backpacking trip of the 2019 season for a month, but the date was bumped back due to cold, powerful storms. I felt fortunate to be there, experiencing true solitude on this wild island. The final passenger ferry had left the island more than two weeks earlier. Most of the other park employees had already departed, as well. Boaters traveling on private vessels could still visit, but the recent wet, windy weather had not been welcoming. I knew I would have the trails to myself, just one last look before the island's wildlife could reclaim it for the winter.

The hike was invigorating as I traversed a number of small ridges leading toward the Minong Ridge. As I crossed several small streams, I noticed bits of fresh ice forming along the calmer sections.

Suddenly, I saw freshly disturbed ground on the trail in front of me. It looked like long claw marks. The newly fallen birch leaves that had been covering the trail had been shoved aside. I continued hiking, then heard a commotion of wings and squawking—ravens, and a lot of them! This could signify a kill site, likely nearby. I walked over to a small rise, then stopped instantly in my tracks. There, on the trail in front of me, was a wolf. A dead wolf. I stood absolutely still, not wanting to disturb the scene.

The ravens scattered as I finally moved in closer. I immediately noticed that the wolf didn't have a collar, which



Claw marks. M. Ausema

Continued on page 2

Black History Month at Keweenaw NHP: Uncovering Forgotten Stories

In the mid-1800s, people from across the globe began moving to Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula in hopes of a bright future in the booming mining district. Looking at the experiences of one such couple, entrepreneurs Larkin and Eunice Jones, helps us understand the Keweenaw frontier more fully, and allows us to join the nation in celebrating Black History Month.

In 1863, the Jones family built a successful stagecoach inn near the Houghton/ Keweenaw County line—coincidentally right around the same time that the Calumet Conglomerate lode was discovered. The Calumet Conglomerate would prove to be the Copper Country's most profitable copper-bearing lode, securing the Calumet & Hecla's fortunes and in time, over \$100,000,000 in dividends.

The Jones family successfully managed their hotel and saloon until tragedy struck: Eunice passed away unexpectedly at the age of 34. A few months later, Larkin Jones married Anna Ward Covington, a widow and also of African descent. Larkin worked as a barber, while Anna operated the inn.

By late 1870, Anna was newly single and operating the inn on her own. She turned her attention to property development, advertising house lots for sale in the "Village of Renova," a community forming on her property. The stagecoach inn became a miners' boarding house and saloon, with Anna as its keeper until her death in 1880. At that time, Anna's daughter Gertrude and her husband, John Phillips, took over the business.

Around 1910 the Phillips sold some of the original Jones land, which became the subdivision known as Phillipsville, alongside Highway US-41, best known today for its former saloon and antique store emblazoned with the words "The Last Place on Earth."

Keweenaw history is full of stories of perseverance and progress. Visit Keweenaw NHP's Calumet Visitor Center to learn more.

~Adapted from the Keweenaw NHP website, "A Migrant Story – Anna W. C. Jones," researched and written by Park Guide Lynette Webber

(continued)

meant it was one of the two remaining "original" island wolves. It was a sobering moment, realizing that this wolf, which had survived so much, had finally succumbed to its circumstances.

I couldn't tell how the wolf had died, but I knew that it had happened very recently. I glanced warily about, wondering if one or more wolves was watching. An eerie silence filled the air.

After documenting the scene, I continued my hike. I reported the situation to park researchers and together, we returned to the area to collect the wolf for a necropsy. We were all curious—what had caused this wolf's death? Old age? Starvation? Sickness? Predation?

The necropsy revealed that the 11-year-old male wolf died due to an attack from another wolf. So now the questions focus on the dead wolf's longstanding packmate. Is she still alive? If so, will she join the translocated wolves to form a new pack?



Wolf track. M. Ausema

Perhaps the legacy of the original island wolves will live on after all...

EXPIRED

Your IRKPA membership might have expired at the end of 2019. If you think this might be the case, please consider renewing at www.irkpa.org/support/join. Thank you!

Where on Isle Royale?



Think you know Isle Royale well enough to identify this location? If so, email susanna@irkpa.org and include a personal story or memory about the place. We'll print our favorite responses in the next edition of the *Wolf's Eye* AND send our winners a prize!

Superintendent Green Retires

Phyllis Green retired on November 1st, after 18 years as Superintendent of Isle Royale, and a 41-year career in public service.

During her leadership at Isle Royale, Green implemented a ballast water initiative to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species, increased Isle Royale's energy efficiency through the installation of alternative energy sources including solar panels, and oversaw the launch of the wolf reintroduction program. She also enjoyed exploring Isle Royale with her family and friends in her free time.

We thank Phyllis for her service and wish her a fulfilling retirement. She and her husband will continue to reside in the Keweenaw.

Isle Royale's division chiefs will fill the role of Acting Superintendent on a rotating basis until the new Superintendent has been selected.

Park Honors Ties With Grand Portage Band

By Susanna Ausema

Many of us are aware that Isle Royale (referred to as Minong by regional Ojibwe) is part of the ancestral land of the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. In recognition of this lasting connection, the national park recently became listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP).

Former NPS Superintendent Tim Cochrane, Heritage Preservationist Ashley Brown, and the late Tribal Chair Norman Deschampe, worked together to secure this designation, to formally acknowledge the Band's significant ties to the island.

The TCP covers the entire archipelago, all of Siskiwit Bay, and extends out one-quarter mile from all peripheral islands. These areas were utilized by Grand Portage Ojibwe for many centuries. They maintained seasonal hunting and fishing camps, performed ceremonies including vision quests, and gathered plants, among other activities.

As noted within the nomination report, "Grand Portage Ojibwe also tell very specific stories about personal experiences on Minong. Perhaps the most remarkable one is told by elder Ellen Olson. Her foster father and noted traditionalist/Midewiwin practitioner, Alex Posey, was born in a canoe when his mother, family, and a traveling group of Portagers were returning from Minong."

Grand Portage Band members maintain an active relationship with Minong, connecting cultural traditions with their modern-day lives. Many Band members use Minong's waters today to fish, which is a significant part of their lives and heritage. Other Band members use Minong's natural resources to gather plants or visit the island to seek spiritual guidance.

The Grand Portage Band has presented their Nation's flag to Isle Royale National Park, with the hope that it will fly forever, symbolizing the enduring relationship between the Grand Portage Band and Minong.

Isle Royale & Keweenaw Parks Association

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IRKPA is the membership-based nonprofit partner of Isle Royale National Park and Keweenaw National Historical Park. Gifts, bequests, memorials, and membership are U.S. tax deductible.

Membership Categories

Individual \$25	Household \$35	Supporting \$50
Sustaining \$100	Patron \$250	Life \$1,200

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 Susanna Ausema, Membership Outreach Manager and
Wolf's Eye editor
 Pam Heide, Office Manager

Sweepstakes 2019 W-i-n-n-e-r-s!

Congratulations to our 1st place winner, Ray Larson (from Durham, NC), for winning a two-night stay at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge in Copper Harbor, MI! Our 2nd place winner, Anita Campbell (Calumet, MI), won a sunset cruise for two on the *Isle Royale Queen IV*. Jeffrey Christensen (Holland, MI) gets his pick of any two IRKPA publications as our 3rd place winner.



Thanks to the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and Isle Royale Line Inc., for making this sweepstakes possible.



And thanks to all who participated in the 2019 sweepstakes, raising over **\$1500** to support our parks! Our 2020 sweepstakes prizes will include a 2-night stay at the Rock Harbor Lodge, 2 round trip tickets on the *Isle Royale Queen IV*, and IRKPA publications!

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