



Save Lake Superior Association

Summer 2019

Dedicated to the restoration and preservation of this Great Lake

www.savelakesuperior.org

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of

Alice L. Pierce

Alice was a founding member of Save Lake Superior Association and served on our board of directors for over thirty years. She was a champion for clean water and our beautiful Laker Superior. Alice worked tirelessly to support the work of our organization and she will be sorely missed. The following is Alice's obituary supplied by Cavallin Funeral Home, Two Harbors.



<https://www.cavallinfuneralhome.com/notices/Alice-Pierce>

"Alice Louise Estes Pierce passed away on June 30th, 2019. Alice was born to Dr. & Mrs. George Downs Estes February 5th, 1926. In 1949, she earned a B. A., Magna Cum Laude, from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. She was then accepted into the U of M's medical school with only three other women in her class, completing a B.S. in Medical Technology in 1950. She taught Hematology, Urinalysis, and Clerk's Laboratory (lab courses for medical students). On December 1, 1950 she married Howard Collins Pierce.

In 1955, Alice and Howard started Pierce-Bac-T Lab and worked together for 15 years at their home-based business. At the time, it was a radically new idea to make and deliver blood-agar petri dishes to clinics, pick them up, incubate, and then identify the bacterial cultures for the doctors.

Alice and Howard loved the Lake Superior North Shore and retired to Castle Danger, MN in 1971 after renovating and enlarging an original settler's house.

Alice was a Board Member and Secretary/Treasurer of the Save Lake Superior Association for over 30 years. She also served as secretary/treasurer of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Castle Danger for over 20 years, faithfully preparing the service bulletin each week and volunteering in the quilting group for many years. Alice was an avid reader and loved the outdoors.

Most of all, Alice will be remembered as a devoted wife and mother, with always a kind word, listening ear, and delicious New Year's Eve feasts for friends and family.

Remember Me

Remember me when flowers bloom

Early in the spring.

Remember me on sunny days

In the fun that summer brings.
Remember me in the fall
As you walk through leaves of gold,
And remember me in the wintertime
In the stories that are told.
But most of all remember each day
Right from the start
I will be forever near
For I live within your heart.

(Author unknown)

Alice is survived by her three children, Candice C. Pierce, Hermantown; Peter E. Pierce, Duluth; and Howard E. Pierce, Sunshine Coast, Australia. Her funeral was Wednesday, July 3rd, 11:00 AM at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Castle Danger MN. In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Castle Danger, MN; U of M Foundation for the Howard Collins Pierce Bio-Medical Library Fund; or the Save Lake Superior Association."

Controversy continues over PolyMet

On June 13, 2019, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released documents showing that its staffers were highly critical of the water quality permit drafted by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for the planned PolyMet copper-nickel sulfide mine. Officials concluded that the water permit would violate federal law because it lacked specific water pollution limits, failed to comply with the Clean Water Act, and was likely unenforceable. The EPA tried to keep confidential the comments critical of PolyMet's water permit. The EPA release came only after the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum, media, and environmental groups pressured the agency to release them, with environmental groups filling a FOIA lawsuit.

Even prior to release of the documents, retired EPA attorney Jeffrey Fowley filed a declaration with the court that top officials within the MPCA had urged the EPA regional office to suppress comments. Rather than submit written comments, EPA officials were asked by the MPCA to read their concerns over the phone to MPCA staff, and these were never included in public documents. As of June 12, the EPA's Office of Inspector General announced that it will conduct a full audit of whistleblower allegations that the PolyMet permit did not comply with the Clean Water Act.

In the meantime, state Rep. Rick Hansen, chair of the Legislative Audit Commission, requested Minnesota's Legislative Auditor to investigate concerns over how the MPCA handled the PolyMet water permit. And on June 24, eighteen state Democratic legislators, led by state Sen. John Marty, submitted a letter urging Gov. Walz to suspend the PolyMet permits and require PolyMet to rewrite its permit applications. In response to Marty's letter, the entire Iron Range delegation--Tomassoni, Eichorn, Lislegard, Ecklund, Layman, Sandstede, and Lueck --called the claims a "downright fabrication" and "desperate last-ditch effort by anti-mining folks to stop an important project for Northeastern Minnesota."

So far, the documents released corroborate concerns expressed by SLSA and other environmental organizations throughout the environmental review and permitting process. Of special concern have been the potential for release of arsenic, mercury, nickel, cobalt, and lead into the Lake Superior watershed--all of which can be detrimental to human health and fetal development.

SLSA has consistently said that "adaptive management," which was used throughout the PolyMet process, does not prevent pollution and does not provide for solutions to pollution when it does occur. Adaptive management simply states that problems are likely, but will be handled if and when they happen. SLSA has also maintained that no amount of financial assurance will replace our clean water sources. Our water is our greatest natural resource and must be protected.

The permitting of PolyMet was a political decision determined by the Dayton administration, which controlled the Minnesota MPCA and DNR for eight years, and culminated in handing PolyMet their permits. The proposed PolyMet sulfide mining operation was promoted by Senators Klobuchar and Smith, who worked with then U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan in an effort to pass federal legislation that would compel the US Forest Service to immediately hand over public land to PolyMet--legislation which failed.

During the entire PolyMet environmental review and permitting process, the Iron Range delegation has been using their power in the state legislature to try and weaken environmental standards and protections in order to ease the way for sulfide mining and taconite expansion. The Iron Range power structure pressured Dayton and the federal legislators to move forward on the permitting of PolyMet in order to provide jobs. The Iron Range delegation continues to pressure government to support their plan for a massive sulfide mining industrial zone that would include PolyMet/Glencore, Teck, and Twin Metals/Antofagasta.

Glencore takes over PolyMet

On June 27, 2019, following a rights offering to stockholders, multinational mining and commodities giant Glencore took majority control of PolyMet. Anyone paying attention to PolyMet knew this was in the works. Glencore financially backed PolyMet's approval process, while designating itself as the sole purchaser of any metals that would be produced by the mine. The approval of PolyMet has allowed a foreign mining conglomerate with a track record of environmental destruction and lack of worker rights to take control of 6,700 acres of Superior National Forest, lands belonging to the American public.

Court cases still in limbo

Following the release of documents by the EPA, the Minnesota Court of Appeals has ordered the District Court to hold a hearing on MPCA's dealings with the EPA in the issuance of a major water permit for the PolyMet mine.

Federal court cases over the transference of US Forest Service land to Canadian PolyMet--now Glencore controlled--remain in limbo while the judge determines whether U.S. citizens have "standing" on their own land--in order for the legal actions to move forward.

Meanwhile the Minnesota legislature has designated an additional \$2.5 million dollars of taxpayer money to hire mining company lawyers to defend the DNR and MPCA regarding their decision to permit PolyMet.

Conclusion

The EPA estimates that the headwaters of 40% of the watersheds in the western U.S. are contaminated by pollution from hardrock mining. These figures do not bode well for the headwaters of Lake Superior and the Rainy River.

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\$10 Fixed income	\$50 Sustaining	\$200 Lifetime
\$20 General	\$100 Benefactor	(per person)
\$30 Family		

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We appreciate your interest as well as your support.

Mining companies are anticipating a surge in demand for so called "green" metals such as copper, nickel, and precious metals due to pressure for "clean" energy, electric cars, and electronics. Energy which depends upon dirty mining and polluted water is not "clean." There is a great need for new technologies which use far fewer metals, for changes in our transportation systems, for increased recycling, and for people to get away from their electronic dependence and return to a balance with the natural world.

By Elanne Palcich

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