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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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You are always welcome to join us at our monthly Board of Directors' meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. We usually adjourn around 10 a.m. Due to COVID we are currently conducting our meetings online. Contact Sue Friedrichs at [info@gcola.org](mailto:info@gcola.org) for the login instructions.

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# CHAIR'S MESSAGE

*Chuck Herrig, Past GCOLA Chair*

As I write this message, we have just come off a successful Gala and are now preparing for our Annual Meeting on August 4. I want to thank the 270 guests who attended and many in addition who supported our Gala through donations and bids for our silent auction and e-bike raffle. The event was a smashing success, and it was great to see friends old and new. It was obvious we had not had our Gala in two years as people made up for lost time in laughter and fun. Of course, this fund raiser would not have been possible without the support of our donor sponsors and the many volunteers who spent months organizing the Gala. Thank you all!

As shared at the Gala I am stepping down from GCOLA in August. My wife and I moved off Gull Lake a few years ago but the Board and I agreed to stay on for another three-year term shortly after we moved. Well, that term has now come to a close, and it is time for me to move off the Board. I have learned so much about the Gull Lake Chain, lake associations in general and their partners in government agencies. I have formed great friendships and hope to maintain them. You are so fortunate to have a hard working and talented Board of Directors who bring a diverse range of experiences to GCOLA. The Gull Chain of Lakes Association is one of the premier lake associations in Minnesota. The Board of Directors and resident volunteers are held as a model for how lake associations can be organized. The Lake Steward program, which originated here by Dorothy Whitmer, is now being adopted by other lake associations across Minnesota.

The good news is GCOLA has elected a new Chair, Linda Harrier. Linda has many years of experience on the GCOLA Board. She is a phenomenal leader and GCOLA is in good hands with Linda and its Board of Directors.

I look forward to hearing from you at our Annual Meeting on August 4. It has been a pleasure serving as Chair for the Gull Chain of Lakes Association. Your support for GCOLA's work is more important than ever as we continue the fight to ward off new invasive species from entering our lake chain, do whatever is possible to ensure clean water for future generations and promote boating safety on this jewel of the Brainerd Lakes Area.

Thank you for your on-going support of GCOLA.

Chuck



**Message from Linda Harrier,  
Current GCOLA Chair**

First of all, let me say thank you to the Board and I am honored to be chosen for the new Board Chair role. I want to express special thanks to Chuck Herrig for his great leadership over the last three years. I have some very big shoes to fill (although he says they are only 9 ½)! Later in the newsletter you will find our thank you and recognition for those that are leaving the Board this year. I just wanted to add that Chuck has always been eager to participate in GCOLA activities that helped support the community, whether it was some very "chilly" duties in support of the Fishing Extravaganza or taking many roles in support of our annual Gala. Finally, being an avid fisherman, he always worked with DNR Fisheries to ensure that Gull Lake got the best level of support when it came to walleye stocking. Thank you, Chuck for all that you have done both as a member of the Board as well as our leader as GCOLA Chair.



# LOVE OUR LAKES 9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GALA



*Lynn Smith, Melissa Chaney, and Mike Smith*

Our ninth annual Gala was held on Sunday evening, July 18, at Grand View Lodge and it proved, once again, to be the “place to be” this summer. Over two hundred seventy lake-loving guests were treated to an evening of fun and friendship, a silent auction, delicious hot and cold appetizers, and fantastic entertainment.

The 2021 Gala Committee had a challenging planning process, monitoring our changing COVID-19 restrictions. They worked hard to design an event that all guests would enjoy and feel safe to mingle and enjoy each other’s company after a long year in lock-down. Their planning efforts produced an event that was a winner! Guests were able to come together for fun and friendship. The GCOLA Gala was just what the doctor ordered!

## **Thank you to our Sponsors and Donors**

A big thank you goes out to the many local businesses and individuals who became Gala Sponsors and/or donated items & services to our silent auction. As a result of the combination of generous donations, a creative gift basket committee, and very competitive bidding, and hard-working GCOLA Board Members, the auction and sponsorship dollars together raised over \$25,000.

## **Gala Committee Extraordinaire**

A HUGE thank you goes out to the Gala Committee volunteers for their hard work, personal commitment to GCOLA, and their creative ideas. The Gala committee began “meeting” via Zoom calls in February. They worked tirelessly for six months to ensure our GCOLA members would enjoy and be proud of their event. Committee volunteers are listed



*Sue Friedrichs, Ann Swenson (Silent Auction Chair)  
and Jennie Ward (Raffle Chair)*



*Deuces Wild! Dueling Pianos*

on page 13. If you personally know any of the committee volunteers please reach out to them and thank them for all of their hard work in making the 2021 Gala a success.

### **Our First E-Bike Raffle**

The Gala committee needed to find an alternative to our annual Trip Raffle due to COVID-19 unknowns. Due to the generous donation of two e-bikes from an anonymous GCOLA family, we had the most successful raffle in our Gala history! (590) tickets were sold and one lucky winner took home two exceptional e-bikes.

### **Gala Technology**

Another big thank you goes to our lead “technologist”, Dave Anderson, who was willing to help at the last minute with a team of four cadets and their coordinator, from the Civil Air Patrol Crow Wing Composite Squadron. Our silent auction is an online auction and requires a dedicated team to assist us through the entire Gala event. Thank you Dave and Cadets for your expertise!

### **Entertainment**

This year’s entertainment was *Deuces Wild Dueling Pianos* who provided a fun filled audience-participation show of singing, laughing, clapping, and having a good time. Back for their second Gala, they proved to be a hit with our guests!

Finally, a big thanks to our GCOLA members who have supported the Gala year after year. The Gala is our association’s single fund-raising event and is key to providing financial support for all that GCOLA does for the preservation of water quality and environmental standards, promotion of the responsible use of land and water resources and recreational safety on the Gull Lake Chain. We sincerely hope that we will see you next year!

### **Message from Linda Harrier, GCOLA Chair**

A very big thanks to Jane Edwards who chaired this year’s gala committee. Navigating the state of the pandemic, while putting together all the details for a successful in-person gala, was a huge undertaking. Thanks to Jane’s leadership, attention to detail and many hours of hard work with the committee volunteers, this was a fun-filled event which also helped to raise funds for the mission of GCOLA.

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Kenneth & Erin Baran, Gull  
Keith Collins  
Dieter & Kristin De Cuba, Gull  
Jeff Gebhard and Roycon Inc, Roy  
John & Bonnie Hunter  
Daniel & Sarah Keller, Round  
Patrick & Raquel Kiffmeyer, Gull

Jonathan Laflamme and Lakes Jazz Authority  
Christopher & Resa Larson  
Keith Lohse, Gull  
Fred & Margo Neva, Gull  
Randy & Linda Rosengren, Gull  
Tom & Joanie Ward and Cooper Ward Partners LP, Gull

## ADOPT-A-BUOY

*Joel Meyer, Safety & Recreation Committee*



*Photo by Pam Mason*

*Memorial buoy for the mother of Claudia Allene and Pam Mason*

When boating around the Chain have you noticed some of the “Adopted By” or “In Memory of” buoys? These buoys have been paid for through our “Adopt-a-Buoy” Program. Claudia has received many comments and condolences from people seeing the buoy.

Under the Adopt-a-Buoy program, buoys can be sponsored:

- As a memorial,
- Adopted by a family,
- Advertising a business

The cost to adopt is \$500 for five years, which is the association’s cost to purchase and maintain a buoy and its light. Maintenance includes installation, removal, and replacement of a buoy if it is hit or destroyed by a boater. The buoys are placed as near as possible to the desired location of the sponsor. This is a great way of supporting our buoy program and recognizing someone who loves or loved the lake!

Please consider being part of the Adopt-a-Buoy program. The holidays could be a good time to discuss it with the family. The deadline to make sure your buoy is identified with a nameplate for the 2022 boating season is February 1, 2022. Any time after that the nameplate may be attached after the buoy is installed for the season. All sponsorships are on a first come basis.

Contact Safety & Recreation Committee

- Joel Meyer [joel.meyer@mnpapamurphys.net](mailto:joel.meyer@mnpapamurphys.net)
- Jay Chaney [jay@boatsandbeyondrentals.com](mailto:jay@boatsandbeyondrentals.com)

## THANK YOU GALA VOLUNTEERS

### **GALA COMMITTEE**

Claudia Allene  
Jane Edwards  
Steve Frawley  
Sue Friedrichs  
Rosemary Goff  
Linda Harrier  
Mary Beth Jones  
Joyce Kamstra

Vicki Smith  
Maris Speckmann  
Ann Swenson  
Phyllis Trcka  
Jennie and Jim Ward

### **DAY OF EVENT VOLUNTEERS**

Dave & Marian Anderson  
Pat Birznicks

Melissa Chaney  
Gary Edwards  
Larry Friedrichs  
Dale Goodhue  
Alice Harris  
Lori Herrig  
Kip & Cindy Sandoz  
Mike & Lynn Smith

# CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE PROMOTES LAKE PROTECTION!

*Dorothy Whitmer, Lake Steward Coordinator*



## CITY OF EAST GULL LAKE GREEN TREES. BLUE WATER. GREAT PEOPLE. *Minnesota*

GCOLA is proud of the City of East Gull Lake for taking bold action on June 1, 2021. They unanimously voted to approve adding GCOLA Lake Steward principles to their Land Use Application! It is a breakthrough that will connect new owners and the City to GCOLA Lake Steward, to promote best practices for shoreland management to protect Gull Lake. Paul Radomski, the scientific expert for the Minnesota DNR who supported us, told us that there has never been a successful collaboration between a lake association and a city government in Minnesota for water quality.....this is the first! We heartily thank Mayor Dave Kavanaugh and City Councilors Carol Demgen, James Ruttger, Scott Hoffman and Tim Bergin for their support and vision. A special thanks to Rob Mason, City Administrator, for working relentlessly with us to reach a solution. Darrin Hoverson, hydrologist for the DNR, also supported us in this GCOLA Lake Steward effort.



GCOLA Lake Steward reached out to the City over a year ago, asking to help us solve a problem: owners who are building new homes or other structures are often unaware of a state law that applies specifically to shoreland, defined as within 1,000 feet of a lake. That law, the Shoreland Management Act, requires natural lakeshore to be preserved (no clear cutting of forest within 1,000 ft of a lake), no fertilizer or pesticides to reach the shore impact zone, which is half the distance to the setback, and shorelines should remain natural rather

than “hardening” them with sand, boulders, or concrete. The purpose of the law is to preserve the water quality of our lakes and improve fishing habitat by reducing nutrient pollution, which causes the growth of algae and excess aquatic plants, depleting the lake of oxygen and leading to fish kills and lake impairment. Impaired lakes are not suitable for swimming or recreation, and once impaired, they cannot be saved. New owners, by investing in lakeshore, have a stake in the water quality of the lake, which directly affects their property values and their enjoyment. Therefore, everyone benefits if the best shoreland management principles are adopted right from the start, when ownership changes hands and major changes are being made to shoreland. What made this breakthrough possible is that GCOLA can now offer a solution to the problem: Lake Steward, which approaches owners with a self-assessment quiz to engage them in lake protection. Please go to [gcola.org](http://gcola.org), then Get Involved, then Lake Steward to take the Quiz and start on the road to “Clean Water, Healthy Habitat”!

GCOLA Lake Steward is planning to approach the other three cities and a township on the Gull Lake Chain with this blueprint for collaboration. If you live in Lake Shore, Nisswa, Brainerd, or Fairview Township and are interested in being involved, please contact me at email [lakesteward@gcola.org](mailto:lakesteward@gcola.org). Thank you for protecting our lakes!

# GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

Photo by MAISRC



## Curlyleaf pondweed research at MAISRC

In the “special session” of the Minnesota legislature which ended on July 7, agreement was reached with both the House and the Senate passing the Environmental and Natural Resources Finance (ENRF) Bill and getting the signature of the Governor. Overall, it was a successful legislative session for our GCOLA legislative priorities as three of the four priorities were achieved in this legislative session.

### 1. Consider regulations (distance from shore, depth, etc.) for watercraft creating enhanced wakes that are a safety issue, cause shoreline erosion and sub-surface ecological damage

**Objective achieved.** Results of the University of Minnesota – St. Anthony Falls Lab (UM-SAFLL) study of the effect of enhanced wakes on shoreline and sub-surface ecological damage that was performed in fall of 2020 are in the publication and peer review process. Those results are expected this fall. As a result, our objective this session was to convince the lawmakers to wait for the results of the study rather than passing bills introduced to establish a 200 foot no-wake offset from shore, dock, rafts, etc. GCOLA feels that those bills as written do not significantly reduce the problem of shoreline erosion and subsurface turbulence caused by enhanced wake watercraft and are not consistent with current published technical information. Our objective was achieved in that the ENRF bill did not contain any language on the 200-foot offset from shore.

### 2. Provide sustained funding to Minnesota Aquatic and Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC)

**Objective achieved.** The ENRF bill that was passed had a number of provisions for funding MAISRC’s important work in the fight against AIS including:

- \$3.75M from the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund to MAISRC.
- \$1M from the General Fund for the two-year period.

- \$410K per year from the Heritage Enhancement Account. This brings the base MAISRC funding to \$910K per year with the \$500K per year from the General Fund noted above.

- Additional funding to battle AIS included the following:
  - \$850,000 in general fund money for AIS grants to lake associations in FY 22
  - \$1M for Starry Stonewort Infested Cleaning Stations from the Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund. These cleaning stations will be put at all public accesses on all Minnesota lakes that currently have starry stonewort.

### 3. Maintain current funding level (\$10M) to counties to prevent spread of new or existing AIS

**Objective achieved.** All four of our local legislators enthusiastically endorsed this position as did Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates (MLR) and Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations (MN COLA). No new bills were introduced to lower or modify the funding to the counties to battle AIS. As a result, the \$10M AIS funding to the counties will be safe for another year.

### 4. No more stocking of muskies in the Gull Chain of Lakes

**Objective not achieved.** No progress was made on this objective. We had support in the House from our two local legislators, but we could not garner support in the Senate for a bill specific to the Gull Chain.

Other GCOLA Government Relations Committee activities during this period included the following:

- Continued support of the MAISRC research project focusing on zebra mussel eradication. Preliminary results are promising.

- With input from GCOLA's Dr. Dorothy Whitmer, Jeff Forester from MLR made a presentation on the Lake Steward program to the Minnesota legislature subcommittee on Water Quality.
- MLR has expanded the Lake Steward program statewide to where now over 38 lake associations in Minnesota have Lake Steward programs. This all started with Dorothy Whitmer initiating the Lake Steward Program on the Gull Lake Chain.
- We secured agreement from the GCOLA Board to support the Ruth Lake Association for the Ruth Lake flood relief plan. The plan provides a gravity feed overflow pipe that transfers water which exceeds the high-water mark on Ruth Lake to Gull Lake. Ruth Lake has no public access or AIS. The plan has been worked by the Ruth Lake Association with East Gull Lake and the DNR for four years with implementation planned for this year.

As of the August 4 GCOLA Annual Meeting, Steve Frawley will be taking over the leadership and chair of the GCOLA Government Relations Committee. Steve has been an active member of the committee since its inception in the fall of 2016. He is very familiar with the legislative process, GCOLA's active involvement in that process and the key players in the legislature, MLR and MN COLA. The 2022 legislative session, which will be in the policy cycle, will have many lake-related challenging issues. Our Government Relations Committee has become a model on legislative interaction for other lake associations in Minnesota. If you are interested in joining this interesting and rewarding committee work, please contact Steve Frawley at [odmajor2@yahoo.com](mailto:odmajor2@yahoo.com). I thank all of you and our committee members, Steve Frawley, Jon Mendel, and Steve Katka, for your active involvement in our lake-related legislative issues these past six years.



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Part of our effort to prevent or control infestation of AIS weeds is to conduct a twice per-summer survey at 23 specific sites across the Gull Lake Chain from Nisswa Lake to the southern portions of Steamboat and Wilson Bays. The intention of these surveys is to provide an early alert that an infestation of AIS weeds has occurred and then, in turn, to initiate a rapid treatment program to eradicate or control the infestation. PLM Lake and Land Management has completed the first survey, and the good news is that no AIS weed species were found, in particular, Eurasian milfoil or starry stonewort.

Starry stonewort, however, was found this summer near Anderson's Cove Resort in Steamboat Bay (Anderson's Cove Resort) of Leech Lake in Walker, MN. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) stated that a company removing plants near Anderson's Cove Resort reported seeing the plant around the marina and under boats. The DNR says that the invasive plant is most likely spread when fragments of starry stonewort have not been properly cleaned from docks, boats, and other watercraft. To prevent this infestation from spreading into other areas of Leech Lake, a plan is being put together by the DNR and Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe to remove the starry stonewort via hand pulling.

Starry stonewort has now been found in 18 Minnesota lakes. The majority of the infected lakes are located south of Gull Lake in Wright and Stearns Counties and north in Beltrami, Cass, and Itasca Counties.

The Minnesota AIS Research Center (MAISRC) recently funded a study to determine how long fragments or clumps of starry stonewort will survive out of water. Since starry stonewort is likely transported from lake to lake by watercraft, it would be very useful to understand how long this AIS species will be viable out of water. This information can then help to establish guidelines for watercraft leaving starry stonewort infested lakes.

The results of the study indicate that the smallest pieces of starry stonewort, such as single fragments and individual bulbils, quickly lost viability if kept out of the water for a day or more. Larger clumps retained viability for up to five days, if not dried. In the study, the key was to dry any fragments or clumps of weeds. Once dried, starry stonewort loses viability and will not re-establish itself in a lake. It is recommended that if you remove your watercraft from a body of water that has an infestation of starry stonewort, you should wait a minimum of five days before transporting to another lake and always remove any weeds from your trailer or boat and



completely drain your live wells. From this analysis, one of the biggest risk factors is the fisherman or watercraft user who goes to multiple lakes in a single day. If you plan on fishing or going to multiple lakes, you should never fish or use your watercraft in a lake infested with starry stonewort and then go to another body of water on the same day.

The most effective means to prevent transport of any AIS weeds is to thoroughly inspect the entire boat and trailer and remove any weeds and weed fragments no matter how small. Drain and dry all live wells and remove the drain plug to remove any water from the inside of your watercraft. These efforts, combined with the five-day rule, are vital for preventing the spread of starry stonewort.

## Message from Linda Harrier, CGOLA Chair

We are sad to be losing Steve from the board and as our AIS Committee Chair. His work with the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC), county AIS programs, and establishment of our local AIS inspection programs on the Gull Lake Chain have significantly contributed to our ability to minimize the spread of zebra mussels, control major areas of curly leaf pondweed, and avoid starry stonewort. Thank you, Steve for all you have done to keep our lakes healthy!



We wish to express our appreciation for three important long tenured GCOLA Board Members who retired after our annual meeting.



**Chuck Herrig**

Chuck served for the past four years as GCOLA chair including a challenging period due to the pandemic eliminating the 2020 Gala fundraising event. He was the Fisheries Committee Chair and the Gala Chair and was instrumental in focusing board efforts to help combat the spread of AIS while helping to increase the Endowment Fund and the AIS Contingency Fund. Chuck introduced entertainment which has been a big hit at two Gala events and was an excellent representative for GCOLA at the local and county level.



**Marv Meyer**

Marv has been a long term GCOLA Board Member and past chair and co-chair who has played an integral role in bringing about many changes and significant increases in our GCOLA membership. Marv served as the Finance Committee Chair since its formation in 2016. He also initiated the Gala event and the Gull Chain Preservation Endowment Fund that will help ensure we have resources to fend against future threats to our water quality for years to come. Marv was truly instrumental in helping build GCOLA into one of the top lake associations in Minnesota.



**Steve Allex**

Steve has been a longtime GCOLA supporter and has headed up our AIS Committee since its formation in 2016. He has been instrumental in helping initiate programs to help deter the spread of AIS throughout the Gull Lake Chain and has been “Mr. AIS” since the AIS invasion of the Gull Lake Chain. Steve also led the way for AIS inspections at our public boat accesses while securing Cass County grant funding for law enforcement AIS inspections.

*Chuck, Marv, and Steve will be sorely missed, and we wish them all the best as they retire from the board.*



We have a new incoming GCOLA board member this year:

**Jon Mendel**

Jon, who has a cabin on Roy Lake, has served on the Government Relations Committee for the past several years and has made notable contributions as a volunteer. We are pleased that Jon is joining the GCOLA Board and look forward to his continued success on the Government Relations Committee. See the profile article on Jon on page 21 in this issue.

## WE HAVE SOME NEW COMMITTEE CHAIRS TOO!

- AIS – Rick Quackenbush
- Communications – Kathy Lundberg
- Executive – Linda Harrier
- Finance – Uldis Birznieks
- Government Relations – Steve Frawley
- Membership – Claudia Allene

# MID-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## MARV MEYER BOARD RETIREMENT

The 2021 GCOLA mid-year financial summary was presented to GCOLA members at the Annual Meeting on August 4. The actuals for the first half of 2021, the 2021 budget and the 2020 actuals were presented as shown in the figure below. For GCOLA, 2020 turned out OK financially, even without having the Gala due to COVID restrictions. GCOLA ended up with a net income of +0.9K thanks to a very generous donation of \$25K by a couple who are members.

The budget for 2021, as passed by the GCOLA Board of Directors, was similar to the 2020 budget that we had generated assuming we would have a Gala in 2020. There were upward tweaks in donations, communications, and government relations and downward tweaks in grants, environmental/AIS, and Gala expenses. The budgeted net income for 2021 was set with a small negative net income of -\$6.9K.

The income for the first half of 2021 shows we have received 65% of our year-end budgeted income, which is higher than we have experienced in recent years past. Dues are up versus the first half of last year (92% of budget versus 84%) and donations are similar to 2020 at this point (95% of budget versus 93%). Donations to the Endowment Fund for the first half of 2021 were \$9.6K and total a very healthy \$441.4K, an increase of \$110K from 2020 (quite a bit of that increase is due to good investment performance). On the expense side, total expenses are at 27% of budget where in 2020 they were at 34% of budget. Environmental/AIS expenses are running well below normal, but we have several outstanding bills which will be recognized in the coming months. The shoreline restoration program has not had any expenses to date for which we have budgeted \$15K, so potential Lake Stewards have an opportunity to have GCOLA partially reimburse (50/50 share) them for restoration work. The buoy system expenses are about \$4K under 2020 as we had significant costs for replacement/repair of buoys in 2020 and this year we have had less replacement/repair costs.

Year-to-date, our net income is +\$50.8K, which is very significantly higher than the \$21.7K in 2020 at this date. Thus, exclusive of any major unknown expense, we should finish the year with a positive net income. We were not able to add to the AIS Contingency Fund in 2020 because we did not have a Gala and net income was very small. With the potential for reasonable positive 2021 net income, we might be able to contribute to that account in 2021.

With our AIS Contingency Fund reserve of \$193.4K and our Endowment Fund at \$441.4K, we have \$635K available, if needed, for any new aquatic invasive species that might get introduced into our beloved Gull Chain of Lakes. All of us should be diligent to make sure that does not happen, as starry stonewort is now only 45 miles away in Leech Lake.

In summary, GCOLA is in a sound financial position through the first half of 2021. Thank you for your support of GCOLA in its vital mission.

Marv Meyer, who has been the Financial Committee Chair since we implemented the committee structure in 2016, will be retiring from the GCOLA Board of Directors effective the 2021 Annual Meeting. Marv has been the cornerstone for GCOLA for several decades serving as Chair, Co-Chair and numerous other Board positions including being a trusted advisor on key issues. He has been instrumental in guiding and building GCOLA to the organization that it is today, recognized as one of the top lake associations in Minnesota. Marv was relentless in getting the Endowment Fund implemented and initially funded. Today, that fund is almost at half-a-million dollars. We all have so much to be thankful for to have Marv served GCOLA all these years. He is a person who has truly fulfilled the GCOLA mission. We wish him and his wife, Pat, a “happy retirement” from GCOLA. Thank you, Marv, you will be missed.

Uldis Birznieks is the new Finance Committee Chair.



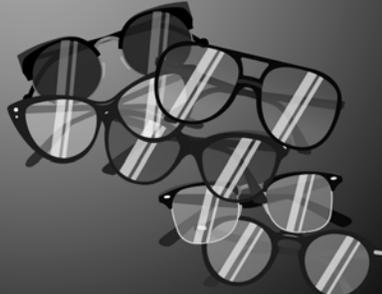
	2021 THRU	ACTUALS JUNE	2021 BUDGET		2020 ACTUALS	
	\$ (K)	% of Budget	\$ (K)	% of Total	\$ (K)	% of Total
<b>INCOME</b>						
DUES	45.3	92%	49.0	35%	48.4	36%
DONATIONS	35.8	95%	37.5	27%	72.4	54%
GALA	8.3	18%	47.4	34%	0.0	0%
GRANTS*/OTHER	1.0	17%	5.8	4%	12.1	9%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>90.5</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>139.7</b>		<b>132.9</b>	
ENDOWMENT IN	9.6				14.5	
ENDOWMENT TOTAL	441.4				397.3	
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
ENVIRONMENTAL/AIS	4.7	9%	51.1	35%	36.8	28%
BUOY SYSTEM/SAFETY	14.0	43%	32.9	22%	42.2	32%
GALA	0.1	1%	16.4	11%	5.7	4%
ADMINISTRATION	11.4	62%	18.5	13%	17.6	13%
COMM/GOVT REL/ MEMBERSHIP/MISC	9.3	34%	27.6	19%	29.7	23%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>39.7</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>146.6</b>		<b>132.0</b>	
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>50.8</b>		<b>-6.9</b>		<b>0.9</b>	
AIS Contingency Fund In			0.0		0.0	
AIS Contingency Fund Cum	193.4				187.0	
*Note 1 - Does not include cost of Watercraft Inspections directly paid by counties to inspectors						

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I know I'm not alone when I say, I love stars! I have loved looking up at the magic of the stars in the night sky for my entire life here on Gull Lake. I dream of the times when I used to stargaze with my grandfather as a little girl and cherish the times when I often slept under the full moon with my mother. Both have since passed away; however, the stars remain. But where has their brilliance gone?

In two words...light pollution! Light pollution, defined as light where it is not wanted or needed, affects our health, the environment, wildlife, and our ability to find awe in the natural night. It is a sky glow that can blot out the stars. The brighter the sky glow; the harder it is to see stars and constellations in the night sky. The excessive use of artificial light can have serious environmental consequences for humans, wildlife, and our climate.

I am both saddened and encouraged by how I've seen our lake change over the years. Encouraged to see the abundance of eagles, loons, and white swans returning. Encouraged to see an amazing cultural change in our shoreline habitat awareness. Now it's time for a mental shift to bring back the darkness and magic of the Northwoods. Isn't it why we all want to live here...to get away from the bright lights of the cities and get back to the wonders of nature?

And light pollution is harming our wildlife. We are only just beginning to learn the drastic effect this has had on nocturnal ecology. Artificial lights disrupt the world ecosystems. Plants and animals depend on Earth's daily cycle of light and dark to govern life-sustaining behaviors such as reproductions, nourishment, sleep, and protection from predators. Scientific research suggests that artificial light at night has negative and deadly effects on many creatures, and even plants! For more information check out Light Pollution Effects on Wildlife and Ecosystems at <https://www.darksky.org/light-pollution/wildlife/>

The good news is that light pollution in our area is reversible and each one of us can make a difference! You can start by minimizing the light from your own home at night. While lighting is needed, there are some simple things that we can do to ensure that it's neighborhood friendly, energy efficient and helps preserve dark skies.

We have a choice. Instead of wasting energy by sending light to the sky, we can learn to use light more responsibly:

1. We can use light only where and when it is needed.

2. We can replace light fixtures that send light up to the sky with ones that direct light down to exactly where we want. They are called fully shielded fixtures. Unshielded light travels much further than people realize.



-here's a sample from [darksky.org](http://darksky.org) website

3. We can eliminate the overuse of solar lighting.
4. We can choose warm white light bulbs.
5. We can close our curtains at night and be respectful of our neighbors.
6. We can turn off all our lights before we go to bed.
7. If safety is a concern, install motion detector lights and timers.

It's time to get involved, educate ourselves, take action and do what we can individually and as a family. There is a plethora of information on the internet, and it just might be a great topic for your children to write a paper on!

- [www.lightpollutionmap.info](http://www.lightpollutionmap.info) gives us a great global look at this massive problem.
- International Dark Sky Association, it is an international dark sky association working to protect the night skies for present and future generations. [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org)

Together we can bring back the richness of the night's sky. I welcome your feedback and thoughts on this issue. [claudiaaroundtheworld@gmail.com](mailto:claudiaaroundtheworld@gmail.com)

# GOT TALENT?

## SEEKING WRITER AND MEDIA RELATIONS VOLUNTEERS

### Writer

Write a couple of articles for our quarterly newsmagazines. Subject matter is interesting, and the material is typically provided by one of the committees, so it would entail putting information together to make an exciting article for our membership.

### Media Relations

Interact with local media (e.g., area newspapers, Lakeland TV) to help publicize some of our events or accomplishments. One example could be to create publicity around our annual gala event with stories and photos. Another example might be to feature a GCOLA member who has made a difference in preserving the health of our lakes or shorelines.

If interested, please contact  
Kathy Lundberg,  
Communications Committee Chair,  
at [kathylundberg@comcast.net](mailto:kathylundberg@comcast.net)



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# ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE PROGRAMS

*Robert Eliason, Environmental Committee Chair*



*Photo by Sheila Farrell Johnston*

We love our lakes. We love actively using our lakes for boating, kayaking, tubing, swimming. We love the chance for the mental solace and reflection they offer. We love hearing our iconic state bird calling. All of this is interconnected and dependent on the water quality of our lakes.

GCOLA has three programs that are intended to protect or to enhance water quality. These are: Tree Giveaway, Lake Steward, and Shoreline Habitat. It also has two programs that provide a measure of water quality. These are the End-of-Dock and, maybe surprisingly, the Loon Survey program.

Loons are visual feeders; they need to see their prey to feed themselves and their chicks. As water quality deteriorates and the lake becomes filled with algae, the ability of loons to catch prey becomes more difficult. Eventually, their reproductive success will suffer, and they will abandon the lake. Thus, the Loon Survey program can possibly give us a qualitative measure of water quality. Please contact Todd Amerman ([Todd.Amerman@gmail.com](mailto:Todd.Amerman@gmail.com)) to participate in the surveys.

The End-of-Dock Program gives us a quantitative measure of water quality. Our member volunteers collect samples to gather data on the phosphorus concentration in the water. The phosphorus levels are determined by the quality of all the water flowing into our lakes. There are two sources of water - streams and rain runoff from the "lakeshed". (Lakeshed is that area around a lake from which water flows over the land directly into a lake. Lake shore property is in the lakeshed.) While the quality of the water in streams is beyond our control, we can do something about the lakeshed rain runoff.

Rain runoff from impervious surfaces contains soil dust with attached phosphorus that was deposited on the surfaces by wind. If this runoff reaches the lake, the water quality is adversely impacted. The Tree Giveaway, Lake Steward, and Shoreline Habitat programs all have the goal of minimizing

the flow of phosphorus and the flow of rainwater into the lake. The Tree Giveaway program provides members with trees, e.g., red, and white pines, for planting. Trees can take up a lot of phosphorus-laden rainwater preventing it from entering the lake.

The Lake Steward and the Shoreline Habitat programs have the goal of minimizing the amount of rainwater flowing directly into the lake. Our homes, out buildings, driveways, and retaining walls are impervious surfaces that increase rain runoff volume and flow. Even lawns can act as an impervious surface, especially in a downpour. This concentrated water flow can carry into the lake any pesticide and/or fertilizer that has been applied. Some owners have left much of their lake shore in a relatively undeveloped natural state and have eschewed using pesticides and fertilizers. The Lake Steward Program is designed to recognize these owners and to encourage others to convert their property to a more environmentally friendly condition. To enroll in this program, go to the GCOLA website at [gcola.org](http://gcola.org) and click on Get Involved and then on Lake Steward. Please contact Dorothy Whitmer at [lakesteward@gcola.org](mailto:lakesteward@gcola.org) with questions.

The aim of the Shoreline Habitat Program is to create a more natural shoreline habitat that can better absorb rain runoff. Native plants are used because they have many advantages over non-native plants. The deep roots of native plants make them resistant to both drought and flooding. These deep roots also help prevent erosion of the shore, and the plants are virtually maintenance free. The program uses a diversity of plants such as sedges and flowers. A habitat is created that is more attractive to pollinators and birds. In addition to enjoying the beauty of the flowers, people get to enjoy the bumblebees, butterflies and hummingbirds that are attracted to the habitat.

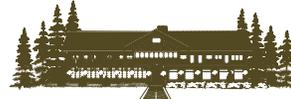
Since its inception a decade ago by Ron Faust, many owners have used the Program to enrich the habitat of their shore. In the past three years five projects have been completed on Gull, two projects on Margaret, a single project on both Bass and Upper Gull, and a unique project that had shore on both Gull and Love Lake. The Shoreline Habitat Program is now run by Sheila Johnston who can be reached at [sheilafjohnston@me.com](mailto:sheilafjohnston@me.com). There is funding available from GCOLA as well as grant opportunities. Please contact Sheila about enriching your shore.

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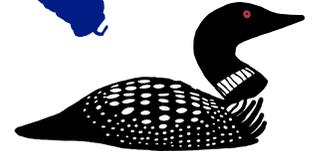
### GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- Advocate for lake issues with state legislators
- Interface with county, city, and township governments
- Share with neighboring lake associations



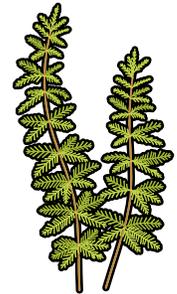
### YOUR SAFETY & ENJOYMENT

- 110 navigational buoys across the Gull Lake Chain
- Boat Safety classes 75+ kids
- Partner with local sheriff departments



### OUR ENVIRONMENT

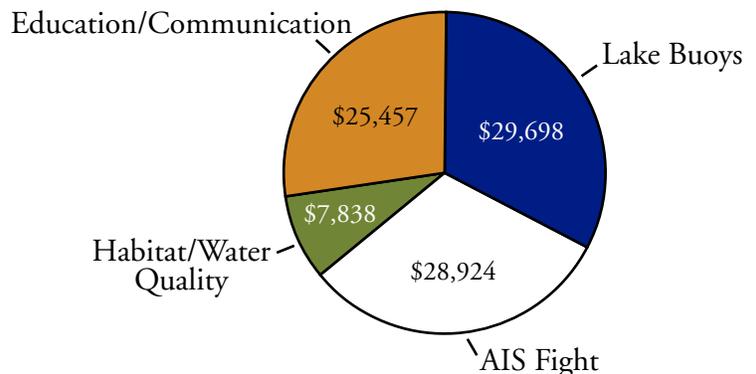
- Loon population surveys
- Shoreline protection and enhancement programs
- Water quality monitoring



### AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES (AIS)

- Monitor & treat AIS through lake surveys and spraying
- Augment funding for boat inspections/decontaminations
- Financially support the U of M AIS Research Center

### WHAT IT COSTS ANNUALLY



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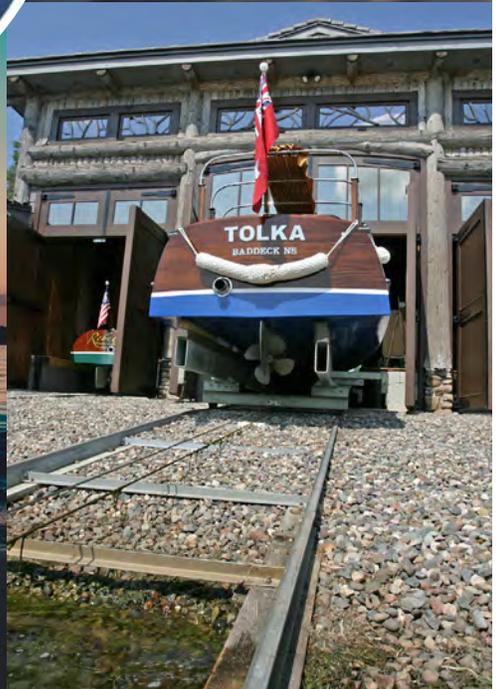


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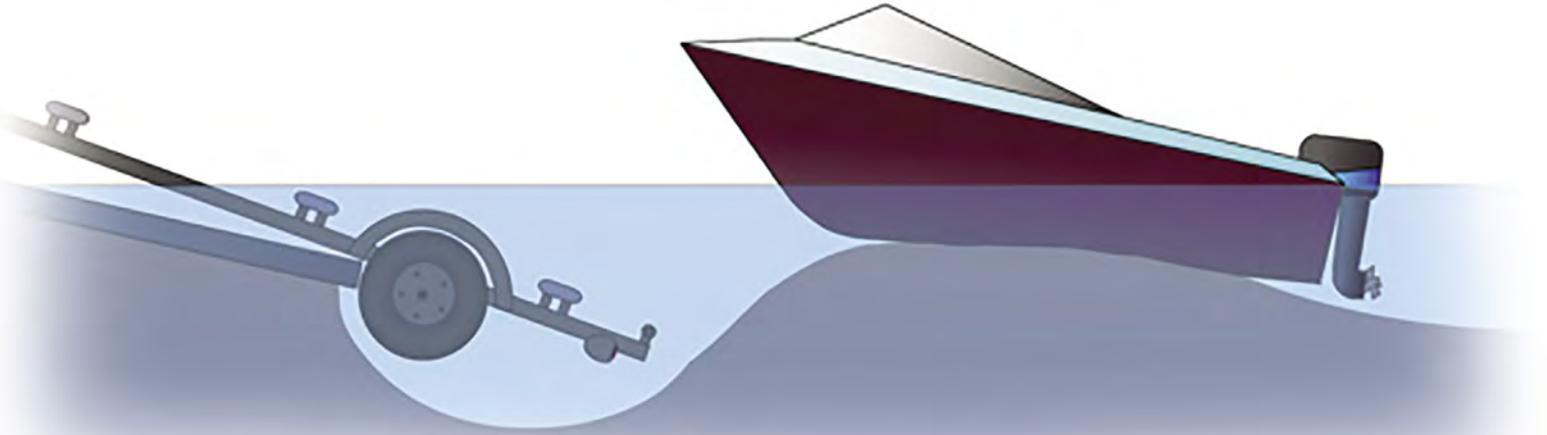
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# POWER LOADING DAMAGES BOAT RAMPS!

*Minnesota Department of Natural Resources*



## **What is power loading?**

Power loading is what it's called when you use the boat motor to load and unload a boat onto and off a trailer. Power loading can damage your boat, motor, and trailer, as well as the launch ramp and lakebed.

## **Why is power loading a problem?**

Trying to load or unload your boat using engine power can erode sediment and dig large and hazardous holes at the base of the ramp. The eroded sediment creates a mound behind the propeller. Trailer tires can get stuck in these holes, and boats can run aground on the mound. It results in a barrier for both launching and loading.

- Boats and equipment can incur costly damage when boaters unknowingly back trailer wheels into the hole, damaging their trailer frames on the submerged ramps or getting the trailer stuck in the hole. When this happens, a tow truck may be the only option to retrieve the trailer and the vehicle attached to it.
- The boat or lower unit can run aground on the mound.
- In extreme cases, the end of the launch ramp can collapse, leaving it unusable and causing the access to be closed.
- Most of Minnesota's public launch ramps were not designed to sustain the forces of power loading generated by today's larger and more powerful boats.
- Repairs by DNR crews are costly and time consuming.

## **What you can do.**

- Always check the end of the ramp for power loading holes and mounds before launching, especially in low water level conditions. You may not be able to see holes from the surface of the water.
- Don't race your boat motor while on the ramp. Slightly more than idle speed should be all that is necessary to load or unload the boat.
- Instead of power loading, use the trailer winch to load and unload your boat.
- Back in just far enough that your boat starts to float - you don't need to back in so far that the boat floats entirely off the trailer.
- Consider using smaller watercraft or going to a different launch ramp if the water is too shallow.

Photo and article by MN DNR

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/water\\_access/powerloading.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/water_access/powerloading.html)

# NEW SOCIAL MEDIA VOLUNTEER!

Kathy Lundberg, Communications Committee Chair



We are happy to welcome Heather Mullane as a volunteer on the communications committee. She is taking on responsibilities for the GCOLA Facebook and Instagram postings to keep our members informed.

Heather says that the photo of her with the “Fisherman’s Excuse” hat pretty well sums her up! She and her family have been part-time residents of the Gull Lake Chain for several years in a shared family vacation home. They purchased their own vacation home on Love Lake in 2017 and finally became full-time residents in 2020. Heather’s career as an Air Traffic Control Supervisor took her to a position at FAA Headquarters in Washington D.C. in 2020, but due to the pandemic has ensured telework with lake views since March of 2020. Heather became involved in the Love Lake Property Owners Association and wanted to continue to be part of the entire Gull Lake Chain. She once got some good advice: “you don’t continue to drive around a pothole, you get involved and fix it.” While there aren’t potholes so-to-speak, becoming an active participant in GCOLA will ensure awareness in activities that assist in maintaining our chain-of-lakes charm and beauty for our next generation, which includes her ten-year-old daughter, Olivia.

## THANKS TO HEATHER FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TEAM.



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We convened the 2021 Annual meeting on August 4 at 7 p.m., done via Zoom again this year. The meeting was attended by over 30 GCOLA members and board members joining.

Our first order of business was to thank departing board members (see the transitions article in this issue). We elected a new board member, Jon Mendel, who is profiled in this issue. We also elected a new chair and vice chair of the board - Linda Harrier and Uldis Birznieks, respectively.

Marv Meyer provided a mid-year financial summary reflecting

on a very good financial position with a successful 2021 gala fundraiser, a large increase in new members this year and several sources of funding which we will be able to use to further the mission of the organization.

Presentations on topics of interest to our members were given by Steve Allex, discussing some AIS threats and things we can do to mitigate effects in the Gull chain, and Dorothy Whitmer, who presented information on the very successful “Lake Steward” program, which has now been adopted by other Minnesota lake associations. Additionally, Steve Frawley updated attendees on government relations activities and the University of Minnesota St. Anthony Falls Lab (SAFL) study of the effects of wake-generating boats on a lake shoreline and lake bottom. Publication of study results is expected later this fall. Jay Chaney presented information on the 100+ buoy system we manage and the youth boat safety classes earlier this summer.

The meeting concluded with a lively Q&A session in which a number of members discussed topics related to starry stonewort and spiny water flea AIS, muskie stocking status, light pollution around the lakes and a number of other areas. Several members complimented the organization for the job it was doing in furthering the mission.

## NEW BOARD MEMBER PROFILE



### WELCOME JON MENDEL

Jon brings 45 years of corporate experience with companies including Uponor, Metris Companies, Traveler’s, and Pillsbury. He has led teams of Human Resources, Corporate Communications, and Community Relations professionals and also served on the Boards of Directors for Gillette Children’s Hospital, Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging (MAAA), HIRED, and Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. He also brings GCOLA experience, having served on the Government Relations Committee for GCOLA for the last several years. Jon said, “This has given me a broader view of how GCOLA serves, not only its members, but the community and state.”

He and his wife have owned their home on Roy Lake for 22 years and know the joy of watching their 3 children and 9 grandchildren grow in the love of their “soul place.” Jon says, “It will be my pleasure to serve on this important Board to preserve this precious resource that we all so love!”

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## US Army Corps of Engineers

As of August 13, 2021, the water level on Gull Lake is elevation 1193.50 feet, with a discharge from the dam of approximately 20 cubic feet per second (cfs). The lake level is slowly receding due to the extreme drought conditions.

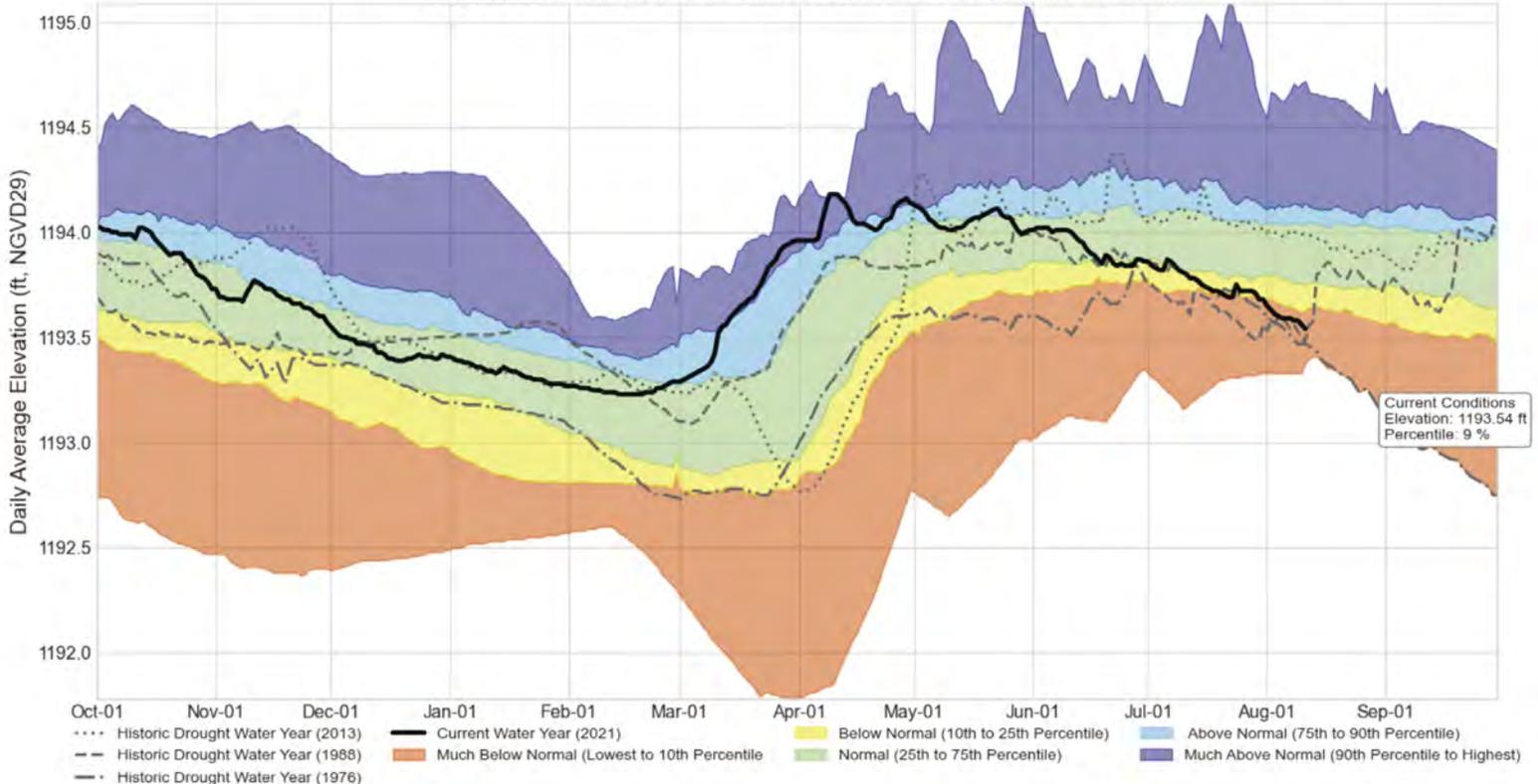
As a reminder, Gull Lake has a summer band that ranges from elevation 1194.15 to 1193.85 feet. Gull Lake also has a minimum flow from the dam of 20 cfs. This means that until

the lake reaches an elevation of 1192.75 feet the flow will not be less than 20 cfs. If the lake reaches elevation 1192.75, the flow may be reduced to 10 cfs.

### Climate and Drought

The current drought is tracking closely with the extreme drought on record. The following plot shows the comparison to prior years.

Gull Lake Elevation: Current Year vs Historical Percetiles (1935-Present)



### More Information

You can visit the Corps of Engineers Water Control Web site at <https://www.mvp-wc.usace.army.mil/> for more information on the regulation of Gull Lake Reservoir. Questions on the regulation of the Gull Lake reservoir can be directed to Brian K Johnson at 651-290-5652, or Brian Turner 651-290-5771.

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# 2021 MEMBERSHIP DUES

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Please use this form and mail your dues to GCOLA, PO Box 102, Nisswa, MN 56468 -or- log in to our website at <https://www.gcola.org/shop> to pay with your credit or debit card.

If you are unsure if you are current with your dues, call Sue Friedrichs at 612-751-6156 or send an email to [info@gcola.org](mailto:info@gcola.org) to find out.

## THANK YOU FOR BEING A MEMBER

2021 Gull Chain of Lakes Association Dues (January 1 to December 31) \$50.00

Additional Donation (Optional)

\$\_\_\_\_\_Aquatic Invasive Species Expenses \$\_\_\_\_\_Endowment Fund \$\_\_\_\_\_Buoy Expenses \$\_\_\_\_\_Board Discretion

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Primary Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

We use email to keep you informed and request your input on issues impacting the Gull Lake Chain.

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Second Email \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Address (if different than your mailing address) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Lake Name \_\_\_\_\_ Location on Lake (side, bay, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

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# YOUTH BOAT SAFETY CLASSES A SUCCESS

*Jay Chaney, Safety & Recreation Committee Chair*

After a brief COVID-19 related hiatus last summer, the youth safety classes resumed as planned this summer. We chose to go from two classes to three this summer in anticipation of more involvement and participation. In hindsight, that was a good decision because all three classes filled quickly. Two were in the morning in mid-June and one was in the afternoon in July. Class sizes were limited to 25 participants as always.

We were also fortunate because each of those three days was absolutely beautiful, as the kids have a unique opportunity to get hands-on experience with Crow Wing and Cass County deputies. Obviously, something that they cannot get with the online courses offered by the state of Minnesota. In addition, the state charges for their online courses and ours are offered at no charge to the student.

Each participant received a GCOLA branded lifejacket to keep, as well as pizza generously donated by Zorbaz on Gull. By all accounts, each student took the class very seriously and were diligent workers. Sounds like they took the pizza seriously too!



I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all that helped make it work...Crow Wing County Sheriff's department, Cass County Sheriff's department, and the Gull Lake Yacht Club who allowed us to use their beautiful facility to host the classes again this year. Also, the volunteers who made the classes run like clockwork were Rosemary Goff, Mary Kay Larson, and Mary Jetland. We couldn't have pulled this off without everyone's help!

Looking forward to seeing a new group of up- and-coming boaters next summer, and in the meantime, enjoy our beautiful lake and boat safely!

**CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SAFE BOATERS!**



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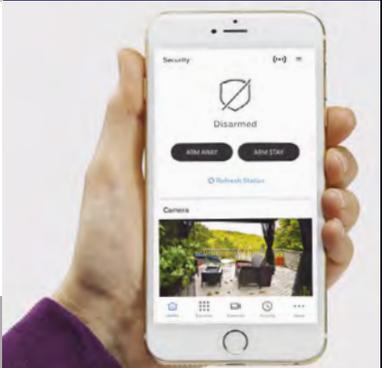


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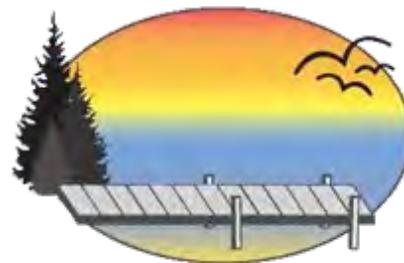
*We have a strict policy of confidentiality. We will not sell, trade, swap or in any other way use your list for anything except mailing your newsletter. We understand fully that you are the owner of the list and we simply have an electronic copy on our system for your use. This policy is not just for the Gull Chain of Lakes Association, it is applied to all customers.*



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# PHOTOS WANTED



Photo by Brittany Svendsen

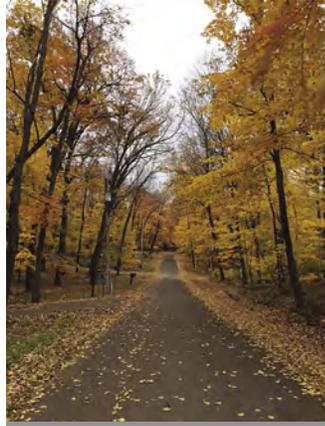


Photo by Steve Frawley



Photo by Sheila Farrell Johnston

Do you have photos taken around the Gull Lake Chain that you'd like to share? We always need pictures for the newsletter, website and Facebook. We especially have a shortage of fishing, boating and other fun activities on the lakes! You will be given credit for any photographs appearing in the newsletter and a description of the picture is helpful. Your snapshots can be sent at full size (minimum 300DPI) to Sue Friedrichs at [info@gcola.org](mailto:info@gcola.org). **THANK YOU!**

# TREE GIVEAWAY

*Robert Eliason, Environmental Committee Chair*



The GCOLA Tree Giveaway was held on Saturday, May 8, at Sunshine's Summer House on County 77. Red pine, white pine, paper birch, and wild plum were available. It was a beautiful day. Kris and Chuck Driessen worked very hard on the preceding Friday bagging all the trees and then on Saturday setting everything up for the giveaway. Unfortunately, the turnout was less than anticipated. The weather was perhaps too good. In any event, all the trees found a good home. This GCOLA program is an excellent way for members to enhance their property. A growing tree takes up a lot of phosphorous, thereby removing it from being washed into the lake. Planting trees, especially along the shore, is a good way to prevent shoreline erosion, filter runoff and improve the water quality of our lakes.

Thank you, Kris, and Chuck, for coordinating the Tree Giveaway!

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# WAKE RESPONSIBLY



## 1 Stay at least 200 feet away

from the shoreline, docks, or other structures.

## 2 Keep music at reasonable levels.

Sound travels well over water. If it's loud enough to hear at 80 feet back, it is likely loud enough for homeowners to hear, too.

## 3 Minimize repetitive passes

on any one portion of shoreline. Once you've run the same line for a while, move on to another area.



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# WHAT WE DO

## YOUR LAKE ASSOCIATION IS WORKING FOR YOU

### **Aquatic Invasive Species Committee (AIS)**

- Coordinates with the City of Lake Shore Police Department to provide water craft inspections for invasive species at the County Road 77 boat landing.
- Conducts two inspections at 24 locations to look for AIS.
- Donates annually to the University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) for zebra mussel research.
- Fulfills AIS prevention needs including establishing a boat power wash station at the Gull Lake Recreation Area public access ramp managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers.

### **Communications Committee**

- Maintains a website ([www.gcola.org](http://www.gcola.org)), a member group email service and a Facebook page (@GullLakeChain) to provide timely communication.
- Issues four newsmagazines per year to keep members informed about association programs and important issues affecting the Gull Lake Chain.

### **Environmental Committee**

- Monitors lakes and streams running into the Gull Lake Chain for water quality. The samples are taken by GCOLA volunteers, with testing completed by licensed environmental labs.
- Takes weekly secchi disk readings during the summer to test the water clarity.
- Promotes lake shoreline restoration projects by providing matching grants for approved restoration projects.
- Awards Lake Steward signs to property owners who have eliminated the use of lawn chemicals, have a shoreline buffer zone of native plants, and upland zone with trees, shrubs, and natural ground cover.
- Gives 500 native tree/bush seedlings to members every year.
- Conducts a yearly loon count in the spring and late summer and promotes loon-safe boating.

### **Gala Committee**

- Plans and executes annual fundraising Gala, including silent auction, trip raffle, and event sponsorship.

### **Finance/Audit Committee**

- Oversees the Gull Chain Preservation Endowment Fund and AIS Contingency Fund which provides long term funding for stewardship activities.

### **Fisheries Committee**

- Attends annual Avid Angler discussion led by DNR and local fishing guides and outdoor media.
- Stays informed on fishery-related research from the University of Minnesota AIS Research Center.
- Reports findings in GCOLA newsletter.

### **Government Relations Committee**

- Works with state legislators the DNR, state agencies and local government units on lake issues and concerns.

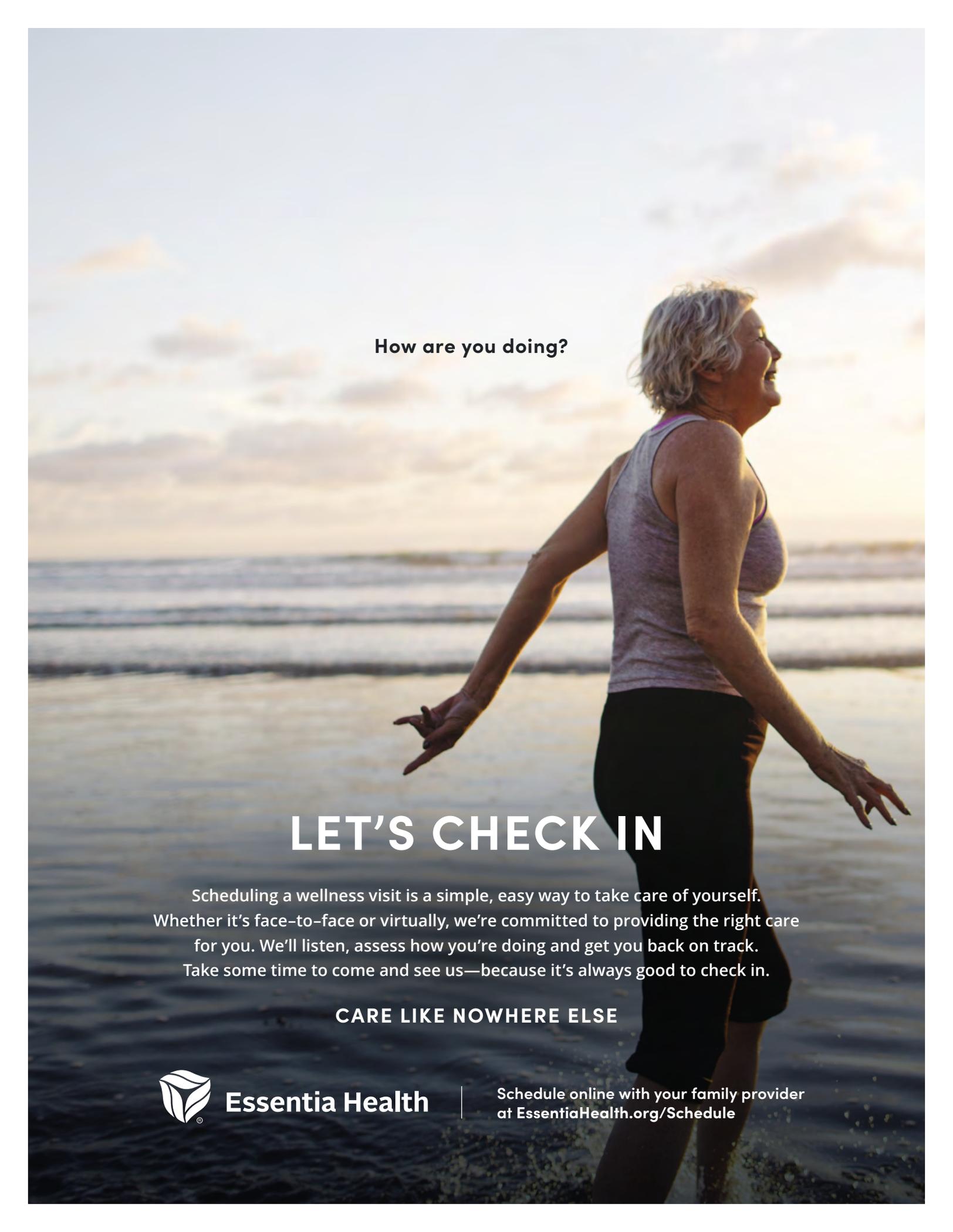
### **Membership Committee**

- Conducts membership development programs to recruit and retain individual, family, and business memberships.

### **Safety & Recreation Committee**

- Purchases, installs and maintains one of the premier navigational buoy systems (90 buoys) in the State of Minnesota. We also install 20 no wake enforcement buoys for the sheriff's department.
- Provides free maps, with boating rules and regulation, at three public landings.
- Partners with Cass and Crow Wing county sheriffs to provide free boat safety training for approximately 75 youth per year.
- Works with county sheriffs on safety and enforcement issues including donations for night vision equipment, a range finder, and life jackets.





**How are you doing?**

## **LET'S CHECK IN**

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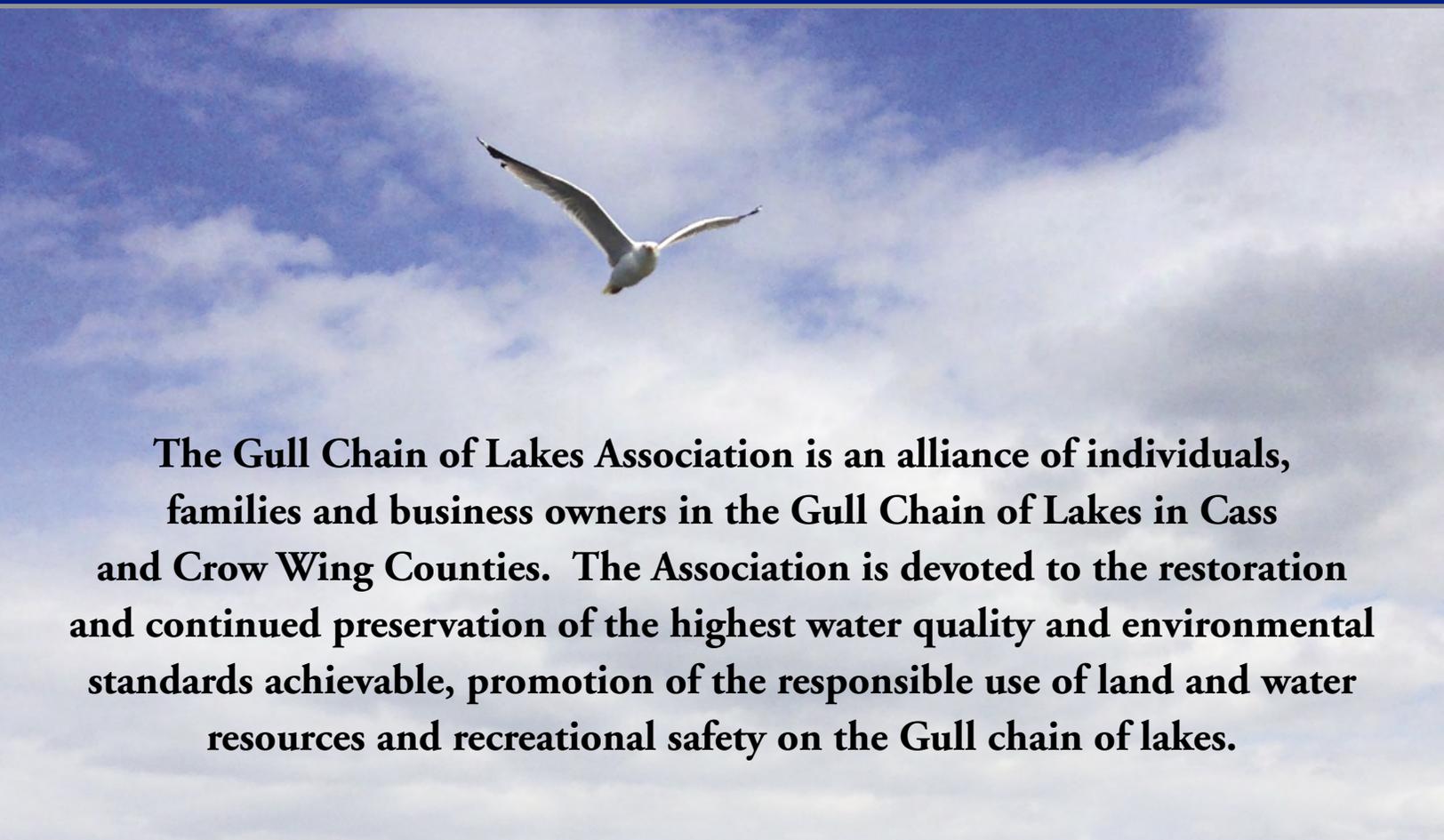
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# MISSION STATEMENT

*Photo by Joey Halvorson*

A photograph of a seagull in flight, centered in the lower half of the page. The bird is white with dark wings and is flying over a body of water. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white clouds.

**The Gull Chain of Lakes Association is an alliance of individuals, families and business owners in the Gull Chain of Lakes in Cass and Crow Wing Counties. The Association is devoted to the restoration and continued preservation of the highest water quality and environmental standards achievable, promotion of the responsible use of land and water resources and recreational safety on the Gull chain of lakes.**