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FISHING EXTRAVAGANZA



Volunteering at the fishing extravaganza were GCOLA members Uldis Birznieks, Dave Anderson, Rosemary Goff, Bob Toborg and Robert Eliason.

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE

What a theatre of weather we are having in this winter season. Great snow falls in November, warm temps and ice storms in December, frigid cold in early January which made lake ice freeze thick enough for "a go" for the Brainerd JC's Ice Fishing Extravaganza, and then a January thaw that melted the ice off the roads and much of the snow.

The new administration in Washington is focused on action and getting things done; and your GCOLA Board, even though we all might not be on the same political wave-length, also are focused on action and getting things done.

Bill Brekken was recommended by the Nominating Committee to become a new Board member. He was unanimously voted by our Board to become a Board Member. Bill brings a wealth of business and lakes area knowledge to our Board and we welcome him. Please read the article introducing Bill in this newsletter. We have openings for one or two more Board positions; so if you

are interested in being a positive force for our Gull Chain, please contact our Nominating Committee Chair, Kevin Egan at 218-963-3546 or kegan22583@comcast.net.

Our Board has discussed for some time the importance of becoming more actively involved in our state's legislative process to ensure that our lake shore owner's have a say in the process. At our November Board meeting, the Board unanimously voted to establish a Legislative Committee. Please read an article on that committee and our GCOLA legislative priorities in this newsletter. We have an excellent conduit with our State Legislators. Senator Paul Gazelka, a GCOLA member and Gull Chain resident, has been selected as the MN Senate Majority Leader. Congratulations, Paul!! Josh Heintzeman and John Poston, our State Representatives, met with our Board in December when we discussed our GCOLA legislative priorities. In January, 2017, I had a chance to meet with Senator Carrie Ruud at the State Capitol.

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CHAIR'S MESSAGE ⁴

For 2016, GCOLA had an excellent year from a financial and metrics standpoint. Our membership increased to a record high of 951. Jay Chaney, the Membership Committee Chair has raised the bar to have over 1000 paid members in 2017. Financially, we also had an excellent year with a net income of over +\$21K. Please read an article on our financial performance in this newsletter.

Mark your calendars for the 2017 GCOLA Gala Event on July 24 at the Grand View – Gull Lake Center. The leadership for the Gala, is now set. Chuck Herrig is our Grand Pumba (GALA Chair) and Steve Alex, last year's Gala Chair, is a glutton for punishment and will be our Silent Auction Chair. John Ingleman will head up our exciting raffle. Thank you to Chuck, Steve and John for taking on these roles for GCOLA. Read the article on the Gala in this newsletter and mark July 24 on your calendar as reserved for the GCOLA Gala.

On January 28, five members of GCOLA (Dave Anderson, Robert Eliason, Rosemary Goff, Bob Toborg and myself) volunteered at the Brainerd JC's Fishing Extravaganza, helping fisherpersons with handicaps on/off the buses. Thank you to our volunteers and a special thanks to Jay Chaney from Boats and Beyond Rentals for use of an Ice Castle Fish House so we could stay warm and out of the elements when we weren't helping fishing participants.

If you are tired of hearing about the muskie stocking on the Gull Chain, go on to the next paragraph. Otherwise, interesting to note that DNR Fisheries stocked only 18,000 of their quota of 30,000 muskie fingerlings statewide in 2016. Yet, with this shortage, they went ahead with the full quota stocking of 2,000 muskie fingerlings in the Gull Chain within a few hours after an EAW request by Gull Chain residents was rejected. There are two sides to this issue, both with pros and cons, but it would

have been appropriate if DNR Fisheries had let due process run its course (EAW appeal) rather than rush the stocking.

Now to get on my soap box for one last item. The subject is the DNR grant program for invasive plant management. The DNR had an AIS plant control grant program in 2015 for over \$600K statewide in 2015. GCOLA applied for one of those grants but was turned down because the Gull Chain had other AIS (zebra mussels). I don't understand the rationale. In 2016, that program was slashed to \$200K (that's another story) that our then State Representative and GCOLA member, Mark Anderson, vehemently opposed that reduction. Late on Friday, Jan. 20, the DNR announced that the 2017 grant program would again have \$200K of funding. Over that weekend, Steve Alex, our AIS Committee Chair, submitted a grant request for that program for curly leaf pondweed control on Lake Margaret and Love Lake. On Monday, Jan. 23, applications were closed for the program as the DNR had received over 150 applications within 1 day. We were fortunate that Steve got our application submitted before the closure. That grant funding is totally inadequate for the statewide needs for AIS plant control. If we are able to get a grant, we would get funding for \$50/acre treated. Yet the cost for treatment is about \$690/acre. Once again, as we all know, the "lakes belong to everyone", yet lake shore owners/lake associations are burdened with the cost of correcting problems on our lakes created by all lake users. Make your voices heard to our legislators. They need to hear you.

Thank you for your support of your lake association and let's be thankful and vigilant for our beautiful and ever-changing Gull Chain of Lakes.

Uldis Birznieks, Chair

GCOLA END-OF-DOCK PROGRAM

We had another successful year collecting water samples to monitor the water quality of our lakes. The number of participants increased from 17 to 26, and our coverage of the chain became much better. (The red dots on the map show our sampling locations.) Nisswa Lake was added this year when two new volunteers signed up. The east side of Gull Lake, which was not monitored last year, was sampled by five new volunteers.

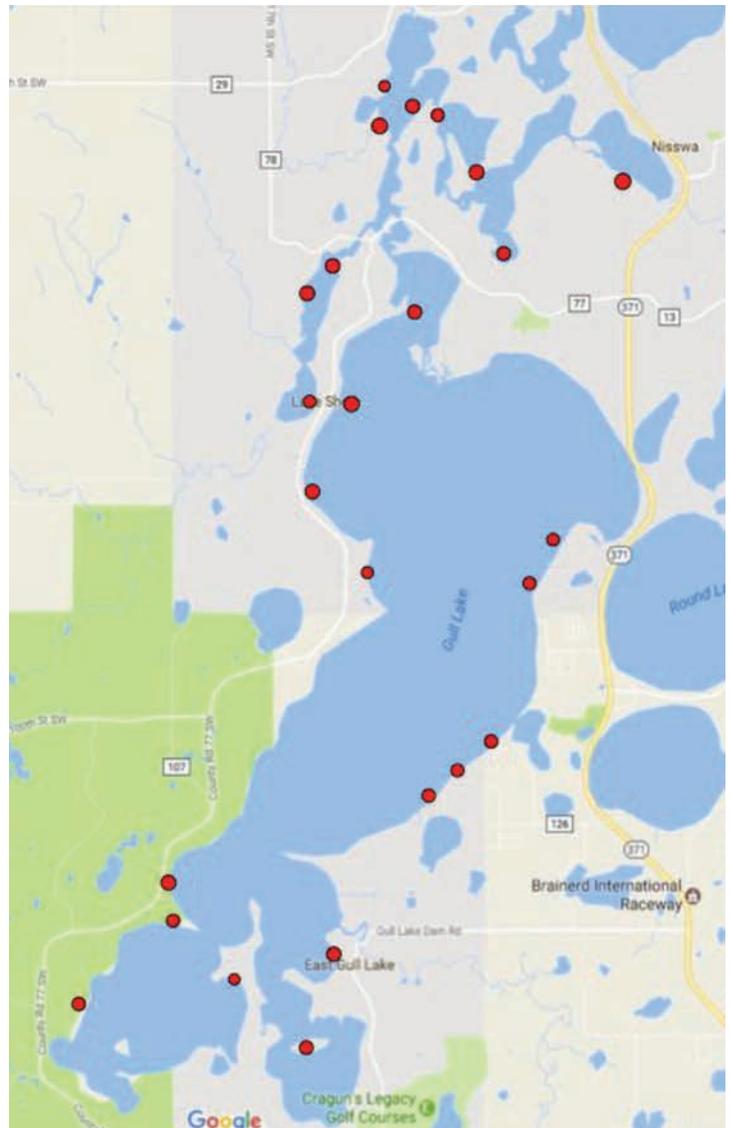
Lake	June Ave. TP (ppb)	Aug. Ave. TP (ppb)	Ave. June + Aug TP (ppb)
Nisswa (2016 only)	19.0	46.0	28.0
Roy	15.5	15.5	15.5
Bass	15.3	13.0	14.2
Upper Gull	18.0	16.5	17.3
Margaret	31.9	59.7	44.9
Gull	14.5	17.4	15.9

The averaged results for the past two years are presented in the table, where TP is total phosphorous, and ppb is parts per billion. In general, the total phosphorous levels show no real change from June to August with the exception of lakes Margaret and Nisswa. Again this year, the Lake Margaret data showed an increase of total phosphorous from June to August. Whether this a yearly trend or not will require several more years of sample collecting. The data for Nisswa showed the same phenomenon as Margaret, but, since this was the first year Nisswa has been sampled, nothing can really be said about this.

The Gull Chain of Lakes is in the Northern Lakes and forest ecological region. Lakes in this region are classified as mesotrophic and have TP readings in a range of 14-27 ppb. Lakes with a TP greater than 30 ppb are classified as impaired by MPCA. Except for Margaret, the TP values are what one would expect. The TP values also appear to be in line with previous values found in the lakes, but more data is necessary to determine if there has been a change.

This water quality monitoring program really needs more participants. Love and Spider lakes are still not being monitored. Roy, Bass, and Upper Gull could use additional participants. For more information or to volunteer, contact me at gcola.endofdock@gmail.com and include your name, mailing address, and lake address.

*Robert Eliason, Environmental Committee,
End-of-Dock Program Coordinator*



THE STATE OF THE WALLEYE FISHERY

The second annual Avid Anglers Meeting was held in December. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the health of the walleye fishery in Gull Lake. In attendance were area fishing guides, representatives from outdoor media, Minnesota DNR Game Enforcement and was facilitated by Marc Bacigalupi, Brainerd Fisheries Area Supervisor. As chair of our newly formed GCOLA Fisheries Committee, I was invited to participate as well. I found the meeting to be highly informative and want to share what was discussed.

First, the fishing guides enthusiastically stated the walleye fishing on Gull Lake this past Fall was the best they have seen in many years. The high catch rate was provided by a high number of 18 to 19 inch (approximately 2 pounds) walleyes. The word got out to the broader fishing community statewide that Gull Lake had a 'hot bite' going on which resulted in a higher number of fishermen than usually seen in the Fall. The fishing guides in attendance also observed a high population of small 2" perch, a prime food source for walleye. A strong perch population goes hand in hand with a healthy walleye population.

The DNR currently conducts a lake survey every year on Gull Lake due to the increased concern with the walleye population in recent years. Marc shared results from the latest lake survey conducted in July. While the total walleye population continues to show a slight decline, survey results supported what fishermen experienced in regards to a high population of 2 pound walleyes. Those fish are from the strong 2011 year class, making them 5 years old. The bad news is the survival rate from the 2013, and in particular, 2014, year classes were very low. Those fish are currently 12 to 15 inches in length. The reason for the low survival rate for those year classes is blamed on an unusually late ice out in 2013 and 2014. The absence of walleyes from those two year classes has a significant impact on the overall population as noted from DNR survey results. The good news is the 2015 year class, currently 8 or 9 inches long, looks very strong.

The DNR stocks 2.8 million walleye fry every year in Gull Lake. It is not known how much walleye natural reproduction occurs in Gull Lake, hence stocking is viewed as very important to maintain a strong walleye fishery. As the walleye population continues to be monitored and if a population decline continues, the DNR Fisheries Team will consider incremental walleye stocking, either in additional fry or potentially test adding larger fingerlings.

The last topic from our meeting was seeking input on potentially lowering the walleye possession limit. The current limit of six walleyes in Minnesota has been in place since 1956! The group at this meeting felt the time is right to consider lowering the limit to four walleyes. No doubt our lakes are facing increased fishing pressure as fishermen have more advanced boats and improved fish finding electronics. Reducing the walleye limit would help instill a conservation mindset to protect this valuable resource. Questions raised by this group were how broadly would the reduced limit be implemented, just the Gull chain, the entire Brainerd Lakes area, or potentially statewide? Many lakes in Minnesota already have reduced harvest limits on walleye, tailored to the unique requirements for each of those designated lakes. Coincidentally, on January 8th the Star Tribune published an article stating that a statewide reduced limit for walleyes and other fish species is being considered by the DNR. The DNR will be seeking input to the proposal as public acceptance may take time. Stay tuned. We will be hearing much more on the reduced harvest proposal in the months ahead!

*Chuck Herrig,
Chair, Fisheries Committee*



THIRD ANNUAL

In July, thirty-three GCOLA loon survey volunteers completed their third annual loon survey. Data from the surveys is presented in the accompanying table. The Nest count is the sum of all sites where loons were found nesting whether in natural vegetation or on artificial platforms. The adult count is from the July survey only. An interesting observation from the table is that Nisswa,

Margaret, and Love lakes have yielded no observable chicks in our July survey. The total number of nests, chicks, and summer adults for the entire chain is also given. The ratio of chicks per nest was calculated. While it might be tempting to speculate on the trend of this ratio, it is likely that we need at least a couple more years of data to be able to say anything about it.



Nisswa	2014	2015	2016
Nests	2	2	1
Chicks	0	0	0
Adults	2	2	1
Roy			
Nests	0	2	0
Chicks	1	3	2
Adults	7	6	4
Spider			
Nests	1	1	1
Chicks	1	1	1
Adults	2	1	2
Bass			
Nests	1	1	1
Chicks	0	0	1
Adults	2	2	1
Upper Gull			
Nests	1	3	3
Chicks	1	6	2
Adults	6	9	8

Margaret	2014	2015	2016
Nests	1	2	0
Chicks	0	0	0
Adults	4	2	2
Gull			
Nests	6	6	5
Chicks	6	8	11
Adults	29	54	49
Love			
Nests	1	1	0
Chicks	0	0	0
Adults	6	0	0
Totals			
Nests	13	18	11
Chicks	9	18	17
Adults	58	76	68
Chicks/Nest	0.8	1.0	1.5

LOON SURVEY

My long time loon survey colleague and I have been putting out the same artificial platform for a decade. During this time, loons have never used it nor, to our knowledge, ever sat on it until this spring. Sheila Johnston was out looking for loon nests and took this picture of a loon sitting on it. She called me about this discovery. Afterwards, my colleague and I went out to see if the loons were indeed using the platform. To our disappointment, a loon was not on the platform nor did they use it. The loon pair nested in natural vegetation.

In the spring of 2015, a dead loon was recovered from Roy Lake and turned over to Kevin Woizeschke, DNR Loon specialist. He collects dead loons and stores them in a freezer to eventually be sent to a laboratory in Wisconsin for necropsy to determine the cause of death. Since the necropsy costs \$100 per loon, they are not sent until money becomes available. In the spring of 2016, money became available, and our dead loon was sent to the Wisconsin laboratory. Hopefully, we will receive a report on this loon. The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 exposed many Minnesota loons to petroleum and oil dispersing agents used to mitigate the oil spill. While the exposure was non-lethal for most part, the long term effects on loons remains unclear. It could cause reduced life spans and/or reduced reproductivity. This year, loons

started nesting on a platform on Lake Margaret. Loon survey volunteer Bonnie Dornquast reported to me that this nest appeared to have been abandoned with two eggs in the nest. My colleague and I recovered the eggs from the nest. The eggs were in excellent condition and showed no signs of predator damage. They were almost hot from being in the sun; so, there was no question that the nest had been abandoned. The eggs were frozen and turned over to Kevin Woizeschke. As soon as funds are available, the eggs will be sent to a laboratory in Connecticut to be analyzed for petroleum chemicals, oil dispersing agents, and pesticides used in agriculture. The analysis costs \$50 per egg; therefore, it may be awhile before we receive our analysis results.

Volunteers are NEEDED for this program. I need administrative help, especially with the summer survey!!!! You can become involved in either the spring nesting survey or the summer chick survey. You are very welcome to become involved in both. If you are interested in helping to continue this program, please send me an email at gcola.loonwatch@gmail.com.

*Robert Eliason, Environmental Committee,
Loon Survey Coordinator*



LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE AND GCOLA LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

At the November, 2016 GCOLA Board meeting, the Board unanimously approved the formation of a Legislative Committee. The charter for the committee is that it “shall be the primary interface for GCOLA with our state and local legislators, local units of government and the executive branch of state government.” Initial members of the committee are Bill Brekken, Doug Johnston and Uldis Birznieks.

At the 2017 GCOLA Board Planning Meeting in November, 2016, the GCOLA Board brainstormed and discussed potential legislative, lake-related items that would be of interest to our lake association. We included potential legislative items that have been communicated by Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLRA) and MNCOLA. GCOLA is a member of both organizations. We also included additional items brought forward by the Board members. After discussion on each of the items, the Board Members used a priority voting scheme to come up with our 2017 GCOLA legislative priorities. Our top tier of legislative priorities are the following:

1. Establish sustained, long-term funding for Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center
 - Current legislative funding will stop in 2018
 - Long-term solutions to AIS will only be solved via an entity such as MAISR
2. Increase fines for AIS violations to be similar with game & fish fines including authority to impound
 - Currently \$100 for drain plug, \$500 for prohibited species and no impound
 - Keeping a muskie under 54" is \$1000 fine - Which causes more harm? Minnesota needs to be leader deterring spread of AIS
3. Close applicable lake public access sites immediately when new AIS detected.
 - Current DNR process can take weeks and months prior to closure
 - DNR appears to be more concerned with public access than stopping spread of AIS
4. Establish AIS Division in DNR funded by watercraft licenses
 - DNR does not have a focused organization to combat AIS
 - Currently within Ecological and Water Resources Division
 - Hard to find who is in charge and who does what

5. Increase DNR Grant programs for invasive plant management & inspection
 - Program had \$625K in 2015, was drastically cut to \$200K in 2016 and 2017
 - This is totally inadequate for need - burden is put on lake associations to fund

Our second tier of legislative priorities are the following:

- A. Limit muskie stocking to native lakes defined in DNR 2020 plan (excludes Gull Chain)
 - In all other lakes, including migration lakes, treat muskie same as pike
 - Muskie preference by fisherman, per 2015 DNR sponsored study has dropped from 6th place to 13th place
 - DNR should concentrate on #1 Fishing Preference
 - Walleye rather than high cost muskie stocking
- B. Mandatory decontamination into/out of all lakes with starry stonewort plus Lake Minnetonka and Mille Lacs
 - Starry Stonewort is threat to property tax base and property values
 - Minnetonka and Mille Lacs are major origins/destinations for boat traffic
- C. Mandatory roadside inspection at “choke point” sites to lessen need to protect all boat accesses”

These legislative priorities have a central theme of “let’s get serious and have urgency regarding AIS”. MN House Representatives Josh Heintzeman and John Poston (who represent the Gull Chain) were guests at our December GCOLA Board meeting where they discussed the upcoming 2017 legislative session. The GCOLA legislative priorities were presented to them and discussed. Also, MN AIS Research Center has reached out to GCOLA and asked for help to secure sustained funding for the Research Center. As potential bills get brought forward, we will keep you informed of ways that you can actively participate in this legislative process. Be active and let your legislators know how you feel.

By Uldis Birznieks, Chair

MEET YOUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER BILL BREKKEN



It is a privilege to join the Gull Chain of Lakes Association Board of Directors. My wife and I and our three (now adult) children and family have lived and played on Gull Lake since 1991, and have much love and respect for all of the lakes in our community!

My life's work began very young in the retail clothing business, initially working closely with my parents in the family business in Detroit Lakes, and then moving on to management with Herberger's. After devoting 30 plus years to retail management, I retired to banking, lifelong learning development at the local college, foundation development, and currently real estate sales. My plan is to continue working, in some capacity, until I can't!

It is my desire to offer the Board of GCOLA my living and work experience in order for all of our community to enjoy the resources that the lakes bring!

Thank you to all of the Board!



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AIS DETECTORS PROGRAM COMING TO GULL LAKE

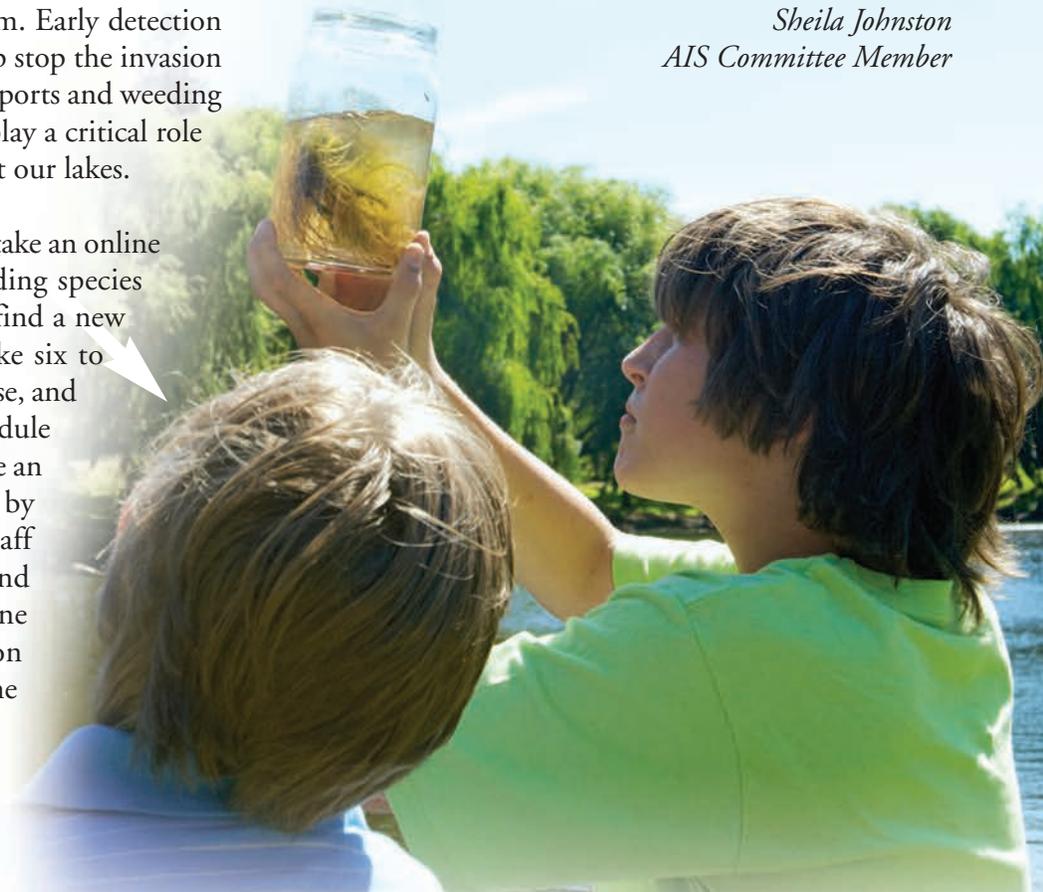
Are you concerned about new aquatic invasive species threatening the Gull Chain of Lakes? Would you like to take an active role in protecting the lakes? Here's your chance! The AIS Detectors program will train citizen scientists to identify and report potential aquatic invasive species (AIS). The program was developed by University of Minnesota Extension and the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center. All materials and information have been reviewed by faculty experts from MAISRC. The course will cover identification of invasive plants, invertebrates, and fish, as well as their native lookalikes, and how to distinguish them. Early detection is one of the most effective ways to help stop the invasion and spread of AIS. By responding to reports and weeding out false positives, AIS Detectors will play a critical role in helping the Minnesota DNR protect our lakes.

To become an AIS Detector, you'll first take an online course that consists of six units including species identification, the steps to take if you find a new AIS infestation, and more. It will take six to eight hours to complete the online course, and you can break up the units as your schedule allows. Next, you will need to complete an in-person, full day workshop led by University of Minnesota Extension staff where you'll apply the knowledge and skills that you learned in the online course. There will be six in-person workshops held from April through June throughout the state, and you will choose the one you want to attend when you register for the program. Both the online course

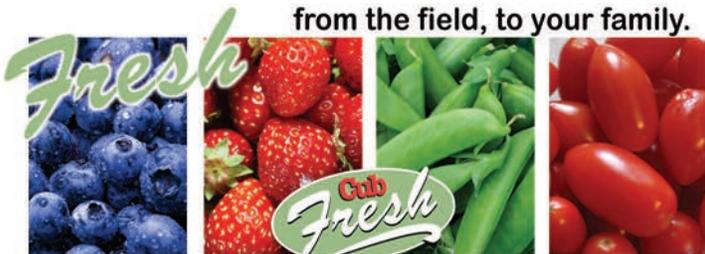
and the in-person workshop include open book exams on which you must score 70% or higher to be certified as an AIS Detector and to be eligible to participate as a volunteer.

For more information about the program, go to www.maisrc.umn.edu/ais-detector. GCOLA will sponsor the training of eight AIS Detectors. If you are interested in signing up for the program, please email sheilafjohnston@me.com.

Sheila Johnston
AIS Committee Member



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GCOLA FINANCIAL SUMMARY

As we head into 2017, it is time to give you a snapshot on how GCOLA did financially in 2016 and look forward to what is planned for 2017. The figure below shows the financial data for 2016 and the budget for 2017 with the \$ (K) and % of the total for each major category.

	2016 BUDGET		2016 ACTUALS		2017 BUDGET	
	\$ (K)	%	\$ (K)	%	\$ (K)	%
INCOME						
DUES	47.5	32%	48.1	32%	50.0	36%
DONATIONS	27.2	18%	35.2	24%	28.5	20%
GALA	42.3	29%	41.0	27%	40.5	29%
GRANTS*	26.8	18%	22.5	15%	18.6	13%
OTHER	3.9	3%	2.7	2%	1.5	1%
TOTALS	147.6		149.4		139.1	
ENDOWMENT FUND IN			17.2			
EXPENSES						
ENVIRONMENTAL/AIS*	78.6	53%	54.0	42%	74.8	51%
BUOY SYSTEM	23.6	16%	26.8	21%	21.7	15%
GALA	17.1	12%	17.1	13%	18.6	13%
ADMINISTRATION	14.0	9%	14.0	11%	17.5	12%
COMMUNICATIONS	8.0	5%	3.0	2%	7.2	5%
OTHER	7.1	5%	13.0	10%	6.4	4%
TOTALS	148.3		127.9		146.1	
NET INCOME	-0.7		21.5		-7.0	
*Note 1 - Does not include cost of Watercraft inspections directly paid by counties & DNR to inspectors						
*Note 2 - Does not include DNR and Lake Shore City Shoreline restoration grants and expenses (in/out)						

The year 2016 turned out to be an excellent year for GCOLA from a financial standpoint. We budgeted for essentially a balanced budget and ended the year with a net income of \$21.5K. We do have two items for expenses incurred in 2016 that will not hit our books until early 2017 that total \$8K. So realistically, the net income was just over \$13K, still, excellent.

On the income side, dues, donations and the Gala continue to be the three major sources of income. On the expense side, the environmental/AIS category dominates accounting for about 50% of our expenses.

For 2016, dues income exceeded budget and has increased the last several years, our membership is at an all-time high of 951 members. Donations were \$5K above budget and increased \$3K over 2015 – thank you to all our members for your generous donations. Grants (County and DNR) have increased to be about 15% of our income. On the expense side for 2016, the environmental/AIS costs were lower than budget because more of the AIS watercraft inspection costs were directly paid by Cass and Crow Wing counties rather than going through GCOLA. Buoy

system costs were slightly higher than budget as we had to purchase/repair more buoys than expected. The main item in the OTHER category that was higher than budget was \$5K that was given to the Agate Lake Association to help cover legal costs fighting a proposed RV park. The AIS Contingency Fund allocation was increased to \$20K and that fund now totals \$85K. That is money set aside to combat new AIS threats. Our GCOLA Endowment Fund had donations of \$17.2K in 2016 and now totals \$211.4K.

The GCOLA Board approved the 2017 budget at the December 2016 meeting. Highlights of the 2017 budget include the following:

- Work to increase GCOLA membership to 1000 members or more.
- Submitted grant requests to Cass County for AIS watercraft inspection, AIS plant inspections and other AIS activity totaling \$19.3K.
- Major emphasis in the Environmental/AIS area which has 51% of the total expense budget.
- Contracted cost to install/remove/maintain buoy system increased just slightly from \$18K to \$18.45K.
- Allocated an additional \$20K for AIS Contingency Fund. That fund will total \$105K at the end of 2017.
- Allocated \$10K for 50/50 grants for shoreline restoration
- Allocated \$5K for donation to MN AIS Research Center
- Allocated \$4K for external financial audit (Budgeted under Administration Expenses)

This approved budget has negative net income of \$7K, yet we will strive to achieve a balanced budget at year end making prudent decisions. With a good positive cash balance (exclusive of the AIS Contingency Fund), a small one-year negative net income is not a concern. Contact me if you have any questions regarding our financial summary.

Uldis Birznieks, Chair

MINNESOTANS FOR FAMILY FISHING AND HEALTHY LAKES

The Minnesota DNR stocked Gull Lake with 2,000 musky fingerlings in October, 2016. This was done despite vigorous opposition by many GCOLA property owners, lake associations, local units of government, fishermen, and people who simply love Gull Lake. The Minnesota DNR has a formal plan to introduce muskies into more of Minnesota's lakes and rivers (DNR 2020 Plan). The plan to stock non-native lakes with a top predator fish that can grow to 65 pounds has the potential to negatively impact walleye and panfish populations and further damage the fragile eco-systems of lakes already suffering from the effects of zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species (AIS).

After the DNR's decision to stock Gull Lake with muskies, a group of GCOLA members joined together with other concerned citizens from around the state to form Minnesotans for Family Fishing and Healthy Lakes (MFFHL). MFFHL is a volunteer organization made up of lake associations, local taxpayers, business owners, fishermen and women, and people who treasure the lakes. The goals of the organization are to stop the DNR from stocking lakes and waterways where muskies were previously introduced and are not naturally occurring, and to immediately stop introducing muskies into any new lakes. Protection of muskies in non-native lakes would be eliminated. MFFHL is working with the state legislature to take action on these issues.

You may be asking, if muskies have already been stocked in our lake, what's the point of continuing the fight?

Stocking a lake once or twice will not necessarily harm the lake because muskies have difficulty reproducing and

establishing themselves in a lake. If muskies are treated like their relative, the northern pike, they could be fished out. The top five musky lakes in Minnesota are infested with zebra mussels, spiny water fleas, and Eurasian milfoil. The risk of spreading AIS increases dramatically with "lake hopping" as fishermen go from lake to lake in quest of the huge trophy. Muskie fishing tournaments will bring additional challenges and an even greater risk of new AIS contaminating our lakes.

If you are interested in learning more about Minnesotans for Family Fishing and Healthy Lakes, go to the website or Facebook page below.

<http://minnesotansforfamilyfishing.weebly.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotansForFamilyFishing/>

*Sheila Johnston
MFFHL Advisory Board Member*



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SAVE THE DATE

Summer will be here soon and we have two dates we hope you'll put on your calendar – July 15 and July 24. On July 15 our annual membership business meeting will take place in the morning at the Lutheran Church of the Cross in Nisswa. You will receive a notice by mail.

On July 24 our 6th annual Gala fundraiser will take place at Grand View Lodge. Come for an evening of socializing and entertainment.



SEE YOU ON JULY 15TH AND JULY 24TH!!



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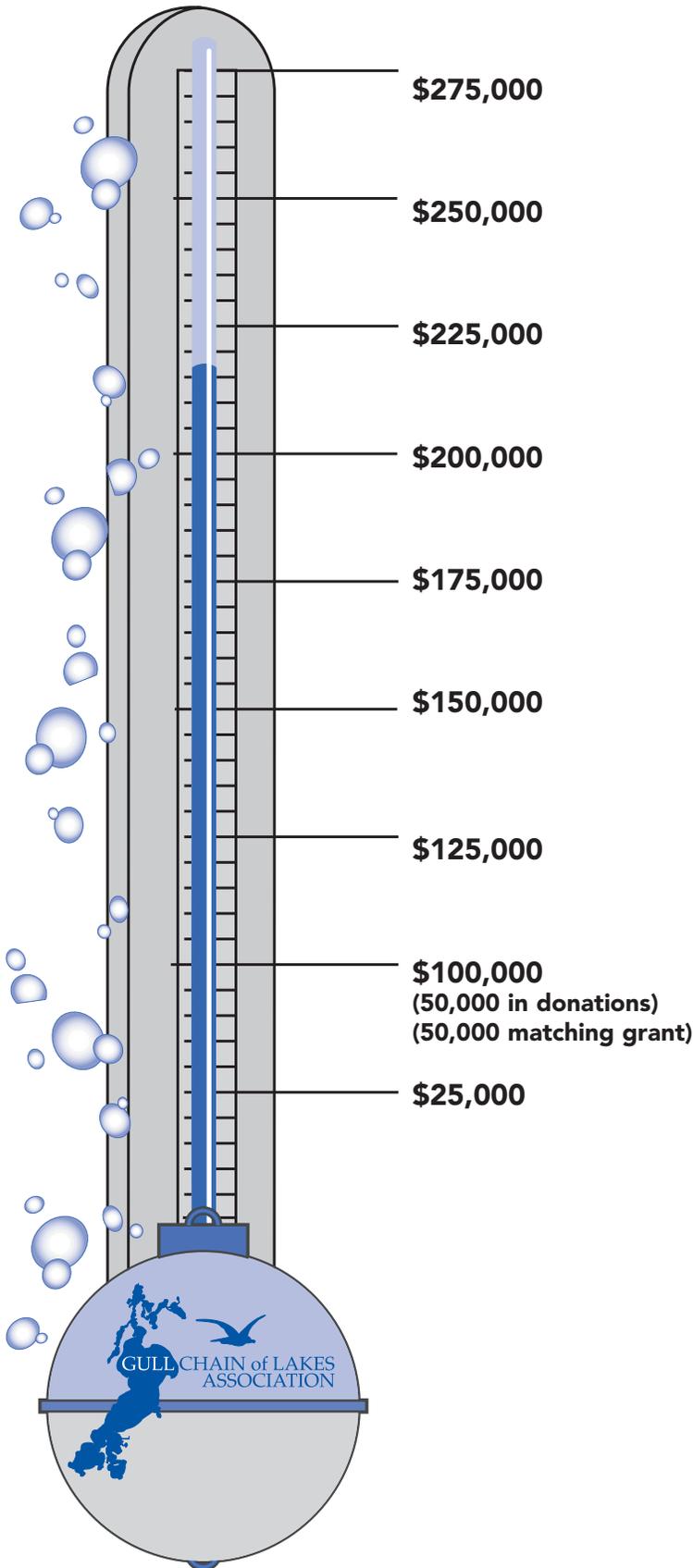
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ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATE



In partnership with the Initiative Foundation, GCOLA established a perpetual Endowment Fund. The fund is intended to provide long-term funding to support the stewardship activities of GCOLA to preserve and improve the ecosystem of the Gull Chain of Lakes. It's also a wonderful opportunity to leave a legacy for those who will enjoy this area for years to come.

We currently have just over \$217,000 in the fund, which includes a \$50,000 matching grant from the Initiative Foundation. It is great to know that there is a long-term base of financial resources through the endowment to be able to carry out projects designed to enhance and protect our beautiful chain of lakes. Watch for a December mailing seeking additional donations to this fund.

The Board again wants to thank all the many members and friends of GCOLA for the generous support of our endowment fund.

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LAKE LEARNING



Ice is a marvelous form of our most precious resource. We depend on it for winter fun, and our lakes depend on it for their natural seasonal cycles. Despite the joy we get from frozen lakes in the winter, the ice can also wreak havoc on lakeshore by pushing up the sand and soil into large ridges.

Today I will talk about the tremendous power of lake ice, and the phenomenon called "ice heaving" or "ice-jacking". There are some positives and some negatives to this phenomenon, depending on your perspective. It can be

extremely damaging to personal property on the lakeshore, but it can also be beneficial to the lake's health and its ecosystem.

First of all, why do these ice ridges form? Ice is not stagnant in the winter once it forms. It is continually changing, expanding and contracting as the temperatures rise and fall. When the temperature drops the lake ice contracts, producing cracks which refill with more water and freeze. Then, when the temperature rises the ice expands, but there is no where for the ice to go in the lake



THE POWER OF LAKE ICE ¹⁸

so it pushes up against the shore. As ice continues to expand and contract throughout the winter, it produces a ratcheting effect. Each subsequent and cumulative push exerts tremendous pressure upon the shore.

For example, for a lake that is one mile across, when the ice's temperature rises from 14 to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the ice sheet will expand laterally a total of approximately 32 inches, almost 3 feet! This can occur in a matter of hours when there is no snow cover on the ice sheet.

Ice jacking is more severe in years where the temperatures fluctuate greatly and where there is little snow cover to insulate the ice and keep the ice temperature constant. This year, we have had a relatively thick snow cover all winter, so in theory, the ice heaving should be less dramatic.

There really isn't much you can do on shore to keep the ice at bay. The ice so powerful that it is impractical, from an economic standpoint, for the average individual to construct retaining walls or a foundation of sufficient strength to resist it. Rip-rap is of little value unless laid on a properly placed gravel foundation and on an extremely flat slope.

The safest course for lakeshore property owners is to follow setbacks and be sure that the buildings are located as high above the lake level, and as far removed from the shore as practical. Setback regulations of 100 feet from the shoreline are not only important for aesthetics and to prevent runoff into the lake in the summer, they also protect lakeshore property owners in the winter from ice damage. There have been years where ice can rip cabins near shore off their foundations.

What can property owners do in the spring when they're left with large ridges of sand and soil? Usually, a DNR Public Waters Work Permit is required for altering shoreline below the ordinary high-water level. There are some conditions where you can grade and remove an ice ridge without a permit. Check with the DNR to be sure: 1-888-646-6367 or

<http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/permits/water/needpermit.html>.

So what are the benefits to ice heaves and ice jacking? Ice heaving has been a natural process occurring on Minnesota lakes for thousands of years. The ridges form a natural barrier to runoff and traps nutrients from flowing into the lake. These nutrients then become fertilizer to plants that grow to form a buffer on the lakeshore. The shade and habitat offered by near-shore plants benefit organisms along the shore and in the lake, thus supporting nesting and spawning fish. If you have undeveloped natural shoreline, leave the ice ridges in place and watch in future years how they develop into great habitat.

Winter in Minnesota comes with its pluses and minuses, but for most of us that spend the winters here, the positives of winter fun on the lake ice outweigh the negatives of the ice's power. To learn more about lake ice visit http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/watermgmt_section/wpermits/ice_ridges.html

Enjoy the lakes! This article was written and shared by Moriya Rufer at RMB Environmental Laboratories as part of continuing education for their Lakes Monitoring Program (218-846-1465, lakes@rmbel.info). To learn more, visit www.rmbel.info

GCOLA offers a sincere thank you to our many members who made donations last year that were in addition to the dues paid. The support of all members through dues and donations is greatly appreciated and helps us with our efforts to improve the quality and safety of our chain of lakes. Names listed below are members who have contributed donations in addition to the \$50 dues. This list includes 2016 donations to the Endowment Fund. Our apologies if anyone was inadvertently omitted from this list.

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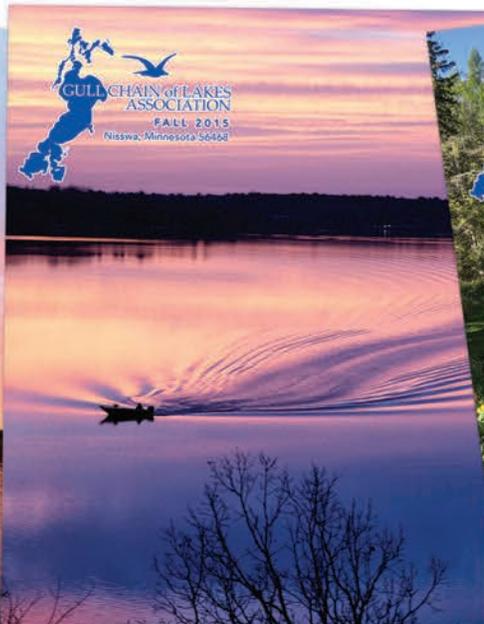
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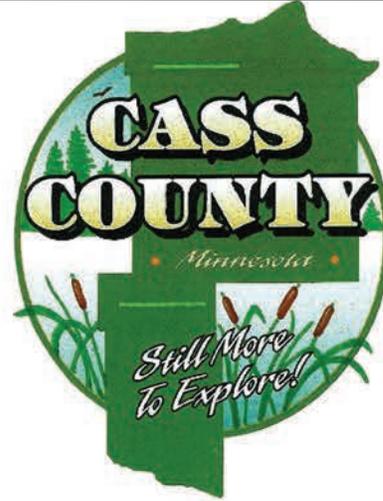
Sledding – Jay Fifield

Do you have photos you've taken around the Gull Lake chain you'd like to share with other members? We're putting together a library of photos to be used in the GCOLA newsletter. You will be given credit for any photos printed in the newsletter. Photos can be sent to Rosemary Goff at togogt@charter.net.

All photos should be supplied at the highest resolution/largest size possible, thank you.



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ROW, L-R: Jay Chaney, John Ingleman, Chuck Herrig, Steve Alex, Bob Toborg, Uldis Birznieks, Kevin Egan, Marv Meyer. **FRONT ROW, L-R:** Arla Johnson (retired), Rosemary Goff, Linda Harrier and Sheila Johnson. **NOT PICTURED:** Bill Brekken or Robert Eliason

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EMAILS WANTED

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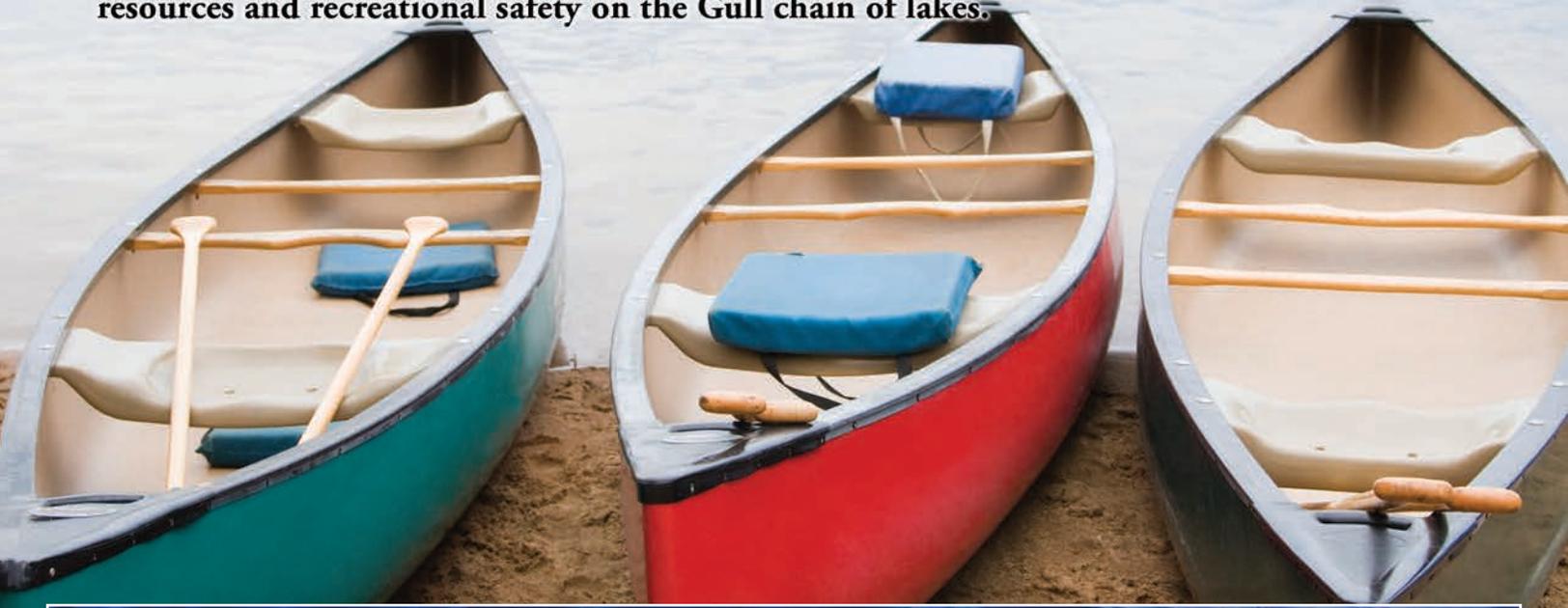
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MISSION STATEMENT

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.



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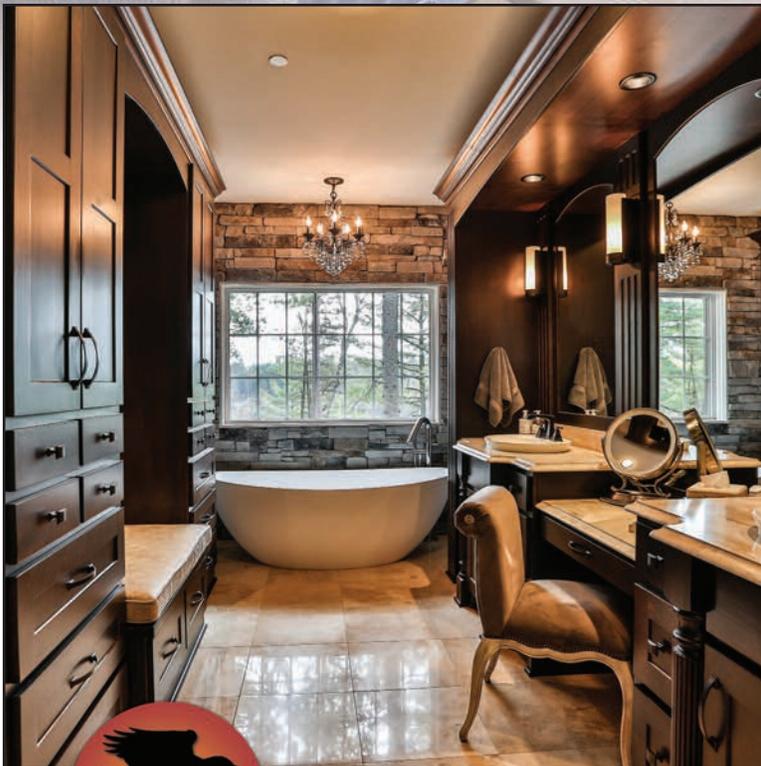


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GULL CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION 2017 MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENT

Dues for the lake association are \$50 per year. They are payable anytime from January 1 – December 31. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation which means that all money donated by you over and above the \$50 dues amount is tax deductible. If you have not sent in your dues for this year, now is a great time to do so. Contributions above the \$50 dues are greatly appreciated. You can get membership forms on our website at: gcola.org. Dues can be sent to Box 102, Nisswa, MN 56468

PLEASE USE THIS FORM: Please provide the information requested below and send with your 2017 dues to the address indicated. We have also provided a space for any additional contributions that you would like to make to the Invasive Species Fund.

Name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Lake address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Lake Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

2017 dues: \$50.00

Additional donation designated to:

+ Invasive Species Fund _____ + Endowment Fund _____ + Buoy Fund _____ + Board Discretion

= Total Contribution: _____



**PLEASE JOIN THE
GULL CHAIN OF LAKES ASSOCIATION**

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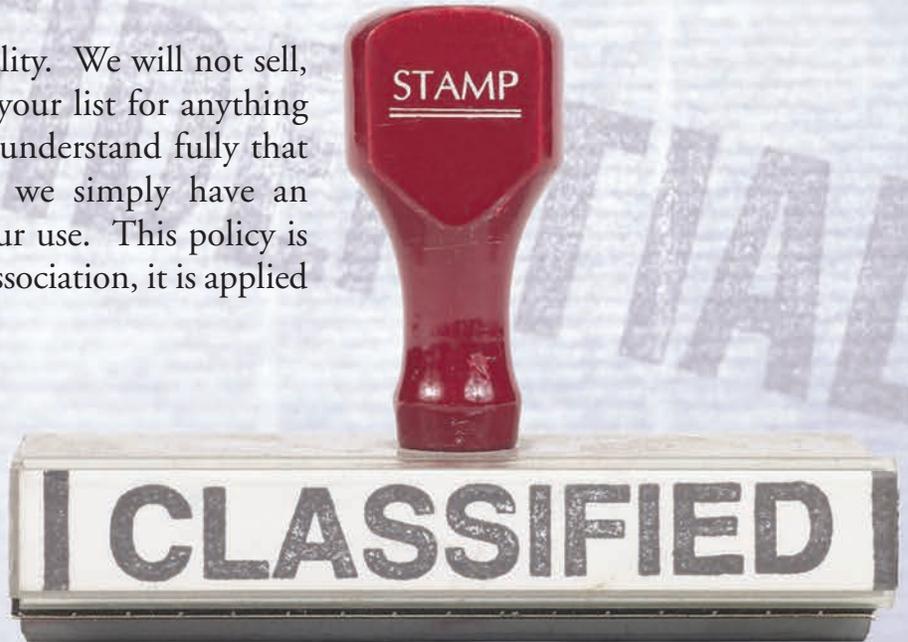
LAKES PRINTING CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Lakes Printing in Brainerd is the only business that is allowed access to our Association member list and only for the purpose of mailing our newsletter. They have issued the following confidentiality policy.

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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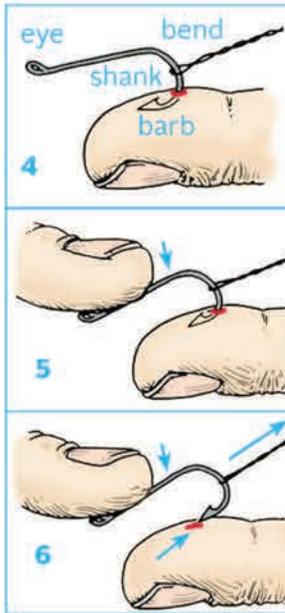
DO NOT try to remove a fish hook that is deeply embedded in the skin, lodged within a joint or tendon, or located in or near an eye or artery. If you are at all unsure, it is best to **seek medical attention immediately**.

DO NOT CUT THE HOOK. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PUSH THROUGH TO CUT OFF BARB.

String Yank Technique

How to remove a fish hook from your finger

1. Remove hook from lure by cutting at attachment ring; DO NOT cut the hook itself.
2. Tape any additional free hooks to prevent other hooks from also getting embedded.
3. First, wash your hands with soap and water, or disinfecting solution, and then wash the area surrounding the hook.
4. Tie off a loop with some fishing line. Place the loop over the hook's shank and lightly pull it against the bend of the hook.
5. With your other hand, press down and back on the hook's eye.
6. Continue pressing down on the hook's eye. Quickly and firmly jerk the fishing line backward, ensuring that the line is parallel to the shank. *Don't worry; only a tiny bit of flesh is behind the barb.*
7. Wash the wound thoroughly with soap and water and apply a bandage.
8. Watch the area for signs of infection such as redness, swelling, pain, or drainage.



Be prepared

- Keep electrician's pliers with a wire-cutting blade and disinfecting solution in your fishing tackle box.
- Tetanus immunization (vaccine) should occur every 10 years. If needed, it may be done any time in the 72 hours following the injury.

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