LOBSTER LAKE ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

The 2018 Annual Membership Meeting was held Saturday, May 5, 2018 at the Garfield City Hall and Community Center. Although a beautiful day to be outdoors, 68 were in attendance.

Highlights of the meeting:
• Committee reports were given.
• Current 2018 LLA membership: 196. There are 385 residents on the lake. Ask your friends and neighbors living on Lobster Lake, who are not members, to please join our Association. It is an excellent way to be involved with and learn lake conditions; plus meet new friends and neighbors.
• Results from the Lobster Lake Survey were summarized.
• 2017 Watercraft Inspection hours were reported.
• The Douglas County Lodging Ordinance was reviewed.
• Brian Van Nevel explained his plan for mapping possible hazardous springs on Lobster Lake during the winter season.
• Motion was made and seconded to increase annual membership dues from $20.00 to $30.00. Motion Passed.
• Mark Fisher, Product Developer for Rapala Lures, USA, was the guest speaker.

by Florence Wieneke
Walleye Stocking Update

As there are always welcome newcomers to our lake association, I think it is always fitting to begin with a brief review of the Walleye stocking activity on Lobster Lake.

The MN DNR regularly stocks Walleye fingerlings, averaging 15 to 20 fish per pound, into Lobster every other year on odd numbered years. Stocking is usually done in late fall, just before freeze up. In recent years, the Lobster Lake Association has been stocking the same on, alternating, even numbered years. This is considered "supplemental stocking". Before stocking we need must receive approval and a permit from DNR which is either granted or denied based on their lake survey results. We have been given approval to proceed with stocking for the fall of 2018.

Our supplemental stocking effort is funded by direct contributions to a Walleye fund from association members, lake residents, and anyone interested in improving Walleye fishing and numbers in Lobster Lake, with some cost assistance from the Viking Sportsmen Club. As you might expect, that assistance is decreasing again and the price of fingerlings will be taking a healthy increase this year. Thank you if you have already made a contribution this year and if not, please consider doing so as even small contributions add up quickly.

There has been an increase in the number of small Northern Pike that can be taken. It is felt that they are overpopulated in most of our lakes and reducing their numbers would be a benefit to the overall fish population of the lake. Lets all do our part!

It looks like we might skip spring and go right into summer this year and the Walleye Stocking Committee would like to wish everyone good luck fishing as well as a fun, safe summer!

***** Remember *****
Please do not throw balloons in the water on the Fourth of July during the boat parade.

Minnesota fishing facts

Anglers and waters

There are about 1.4 million licensed anglers in Minnesota. About 500,000 people are expected to fish on Minnesota’s opening day of the walleye and northern pike season, Saturday, May 12.

Minnesota has 11,842 lakes, 4,500 of which are considered fishing lakes. There are over 18,000 miles of fishable rivers and streams, including 3,800 miles of trout streams.

Average annual expenditure per angler in Minnesota is about $1,500.* Although not every kind of fish lives everywhere, 162 species of fish can be found in Minnesota waters.
DENNIS ANDERSON • danderson@startribune.com The DNR is allowing record-eligible Northerns, like this monster caught in Upper Red Lake, to be measured and photographed, then released before it’s submitted for record consideration.

Minnesota’s greatly revamped northern pike regulations for 2018 encourage anglers in much of the state to catch and eat more small to middling-sized fish.

But when it comes to lunkers, there’s extra encouragement along with new rules to advance the growing practice of catch and release.

Last week, the Department of Natural Resources expanded its fledgling catch-and-release record fish program by adding a category for northern pike. Anglers no longer have to keep and weigh a Muskie, flathead catfish, lake sturgeon or northern pike to vie for a place in the state’s record books.

“What do you do with a 45-inch northern anyway?” asked Andrew Slette, the state catch-and-release record holder for Muskie. “It’s definitely a good program. You put it back so someone else can catch it.”

Slette, an avid Otter Tail County fisherman from Hawley, Minn., earned statewide bragging rights when he landed a 56⅞-inch Muskie on Pelican Lake in June 2016. It was the first year of the program, but his record in the category still stands.

Mike “Cold Front” Kurre, who heads the agency’s record fish program, said the new catch-and-release category adds excitement for catch-and-release devotees who previously thought they could never break a record. And the option remains to participate in the traditional category of records for all game species based on certified weight of kept fish.

Kurre and DNR fisheries staff member Al Stevens said the agency is considering further expansion of the program and possibly partnering with the nonprofit Minnesota Fishing Hall of Fame to help with administration. But it’s also possible the program would stand pat with four species categories, they said.

“We are investigating many options and it’s in its infancy stage,” Kurre said.

In the first two years, about 15 anglers submitted entries for consideration of catch-and-release state records. To be eligible for any state record, anglers must obtain a valid license and the fish must be caught in season. To apply for a catch-and-release record, anglers send one photo of the fish displayed alongside a measuring stick, ruler or tape; and one photo of the angler with the fish.

(Continued Page 4)
Happens in threes

DNR regional fisheries supervisor Chris Kavanaugh, who heads the agency's northern pike working group, said he has given hundreds of presentations on the state's new regulations. They take effect May 12 and apply only to inland waters.

In the new three-zone rule book for the toothy predators, the biggest change is in the biggest zone — one that incorporates waters north of the Twin Cities, excluding the Arrowhead Region. Anglers in this “North-Central Zone” can keep a hardy limit of 10 Northern pike, but not more than two pike longer than 26 inches. In addition, all North-Central Northerns 22 to 26 inches in length must be released.

Kavanaugh said the 22-to-26-inch protected slot is designed to boost the size structure of Northern pike in a region where lots of lakes are now dominated by smallish “hammer-handles.” Those often-dense hammer-handle populations can stunt panfish populations and interfere with walleye stocking programs by eating up their babies.

Lots of small Northerns can be harvested without damaging reproduction of the species. But by creating a slot limit, the protected Northerns will grow and ultimately bolster a population of more enviable game fish 27 inches and longer.

“The real key is protecting 22- to 26-inch fish,” Kavanaugh said. “We think this will move the needle on quality of pike” in the state's largest fishing zone.

“In three to five years we’ll start seeing more big ones,” he added.

In the arrowhead-shaped “Northeast Zone,” an area east of a line from Duluth to International Falls, regulations are designed to protect a region already known for high-quality pike fishing. Kavanaugh said there are lower densities of Northern pike in the Northeast Zone, but the population is rich in good-sized fish spread across lakes that don’t experience as much angling pressure as in the rest of the state.

In the northeast, anglers will be able to keep two pike. All Northerns 30 to 40 inches must be released and only one over 40 inches is allowed in possession. DNR officials have said in the past that the rules are meant to preserve the region's reputation for trophy Northern pike.

Kavanaugh said new regulations for the “Southern Zone” are meant to increase low densities of Northern pike in a region where the fish, while scarce, grow relatively fast. Under the rules, Southern Zone anglers may keep two pike as long as they are at least 24 inches in length. The approach also is meant to improve the size of fish harvested.

“I personally think we've landed in the right spot,” Kavanaugh said.

To spear or not

When the Northern pike working group considered new rules for winter spearing, it was guided by the practical reality that it’s challenging for darkhouse occupants to accurately estimate a pike’s length. Here are the new rules, by zone:

North-Central: Ten-fish bag with a 22- to 26-inch protected slot and only two can be longer than 26 inches. One fish can be within the slot, but then only one can be kept longer than 26 inches.

Northeast: Spearers can take two pike, but only one over 26 inches.

Southern: Two-fish bag, each with a minimum length of 24 inches.
Tell your elected officials to oppose raiding funds dedicated for our Great Outdoors!

Dear Linda,

Over and over again Minnesotans have voted to constitutionally dedicate funding to protect, enhance, and restore our Great Outdoors. The Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund was created by a constitutional amendment first passed in 1988 and reauthorized twice since then. The Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment was passed in 2008 with overwhelming support from the voters – even during the great recession.

Yet, in the final days of Minnesota's Legislative session, two proposals which would raid these dedicated conservation funds.

The first bill (HF 4395/SF 3960) would use Clean Water Funds from the Legacy Amendment to provide a $50 per acre tax break to landowners who have riparian buffers. The installation of these buffers is already required under the new buffer law and statewide, over 97% of landowners are already in compliance with the riparian buffer law. This new proposal would not pay for any buffer installation costs, but rather simply acts as a tax credit for landowners doing what they are already required to do by law.

The second proposal (HF 4404, Amendment 23) would use the Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund to pay debt service and interest on $104 million worth of appropriation bonds for local projects ranging from ATV trails to transportation projects to wastewater infrastructure. The Environment and Natural Resource Trust Fund is funded through lottery proceeds and constitutionally limited to “the public purpose of protection, conservation, preservation, and enhancement of the state’s air, water, land, fish, wildlife, and other natural resources.” The Trust Fund was not created for the purpose of paying interest and debt service on appropriation bonds, but this proposal would do just that.

Please take a minute to contact your state representative, state senator, and Governor Dayton before time runs out. Tell them Minnesotans didn’t pass two constitutional amendments to pay interest on bonds or to give tax breaks for a few. The constitutional amendments are meant to protect Minnesota’s Great Outdoors!

Together we can protect the Minnesota we all love.

Sincerely,

Nels Paulsen
Policy Director
DNR encourages homeowners to compost, not burn!

Annual burning restrictions coming soon

In an effort to prevent wildfires, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources urges woodland property owners to compost their yard waste rather than burn it. Full Story

“Burning should be a last resort for yard waste—especially in April and May, when wildfire risk is especially high,” said Casey McCoy, fire prevention supervisor. “Composting prevents wildfires and reduces air pollution, so it’s the safest possible way to manage yard debris.”

The University of Minnesota Extension offers a step-by-step guide to composting yard waste on its website.

For landowners who feel they must burn yard debris, now is the time to do it. That’s because annual burning restrictions will take effect immediately after snowmelt occurs, which will happen soon in parts of Minnesota. Three inches of snow significantly reduces the chances that a fire will escape and burn unintended areas or endanger lives, homes, and neighboring properties. If a yard waste fire does escape, the homeowner is responsible for any damage it does to nearby property.

Although a DNR burning permit is not required in many locations where there is sufficient snow, be sure to check local regulations prior to burning. Once burning restrictions are issued, debris burning will be banned, and no permits issued, until further notice.

2018 LOBSTER LAKE ASSOCIATION DUES INVOICE

NAME (S)_________________________________________________________

LAKE ADDRESS_____________________________________________________

HOME ADDRESS_____________________________________________________

HOME PHONE________________________ LAKE PHONE___________________

E-MAIL ADDRESS_____________________________________________________

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE………………………………………………..    $20.00

ADDITIONAL (OPTIONAL) CONTRIBUTION TO WALLEYE FUND________

TOTAL ENCLOSED………………………………………………………………….___________

MAIL TO:    Lobster Lake Association
             PO BOX 32
             Alexandria, MN  56308
MEMBERSHIP UPDATE 2018

All Lobster Lake residents received an invitation to join the lake association in April. Membership in the lake association provides financial support for our two newsletters, the lake directory, water quality monitoring, loons nests and the Lake Management Plan. Dues for membership are $20.00 for this year. At the Annual Meeting a motion was made and passed, to raise the dues to $30.00 dollars for next year. It is the first time, dues have been increased since the lake association began in 1985.

We had approximately 227 members in 2017. There are currently 385 residents. Please encourage neighbors and frequent visitors to join the Lake Association. If you have not paid your 2018 dues, complete the form in the newsletter and mail it to Lobster Lake Association, PO Box 32, Alexandria, MN 56308. If you have moved, changed phone numbers or have additional new information, contact me at tnvav723@gmail.com.

Welcome new members and residents:

Randy Beaver                  Rockwood Shores
Penny and Bradley Aurdahl    Tall Timbers
Daniel and Christy Brusven   Rowland Cove
Dustin Buchert               Paulins Paradise
Alvin and Rosanne Gloege     Beauty Point
Dana and Miranda Rach        Paulins Paradise
TBARA’s                      Paulins Paradise
Gary and Jennifer Walker     Tall Timbers
Runfe’s                      Ruebens Landing
Joe Wolf and Melany Arceneau Tall Timbers
## Lobster Wear Price List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult/Youth Sizing</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Zip Sweatshirts (S-XL)</td>
<td>$32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-3X)</td>
<td>$34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crewneck Sweatshirts (S-XL)</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-5X)</td>
<td>$26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooded Sweatshirts (S-XL)</td>
<td>$28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-5X)</td>
<td>$30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polo Shirts (S-XL)</td>
<td>$17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-5X)</td>
<td>$19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-Shirts (S-XL)</td>
<td>$18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-5X)</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Sleeved Tees (S-XL)</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Sizes (2X-5X)</td>
<td>$22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ball Caps</td>
<td>$16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Bags</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobster Flags 3x5</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Add $3 for a full front logo**