

THE VERMILION



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To Protect and Improve Lake Vermilion

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings friends and neighbors,

This is the 51st year of the Vermilion Lake Association, and we will celebrate again with our annual meeting, this year at the Tower-Soudan Elementary School on Saturday, August 10. Our keynote speaker will be Kevin Kenow, a Research Biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey located in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The title of his presentation will be "Unraveling Mysteries of the Common Loon". Kevin will discuss the status of the loon population and a potential restoration project. Do not miss this annual meeting and this speaker, RSVP now. Please make sure you read the enclosed articles about man-made loon nests on Lake Vermilion including the ones installed by our lake association. I would like to thank Mel Hintz for his efforts to get our loon nest program implemented. I call him the loon grandpa.



Terry Grosshauser
VLA President

With regards to our board of directors, Howard Ankrum and Rob Joki have decided to retire from the board. Howard has served on the board since 2010 and he has been a key source of information on county public operations and I will miss his thoughtful comments and communication in the board meetings. Rob has been on the board for three years and came to us with a strong financial background and has been involved in guiding the improvement of our financial controls. We want to thank these board members for their commitment and let them know they will be missed. Per our bylaws we can have 15 board members and we will be asking for membership approval of an expansion of the number of board members to 18. The need is to have additional good candidates in place on the board if board

members leave for health reasons or other issues. We will ask for approval of new board members and extension for other board members at the annual meeting. Mel Hintz is also taking a leave from the projects he coordinates to fight a recurrence of cancer, as he is spending a lot of time between the lake and Mayo Clinic. Mel is in our thoughts and prayers.

I cannot be more pleased with the board of directors; we are taking on more challenges and leading important projects to protect Lake Vermilion. Please take time to get to know the board members at the annual meeting and bring your questions or concerns so that you can get answers. If you are not attending the meeting, please forward your questions to any board member; these questions are discussed at each board meeting. You are the members and the board considers you as our customers, and we are trying to address as many issues as we can concerning the lake.

On the AIS front, we have all of our prevention programs in place for this year and they include boat checking at public accesses, private accesses, and fishing tournaments, along with a comprehensive volunteer sentry program checking launch sites both private and public for possible new AIS infestations. We ask individual property owners to only launch boats at public launch sites so that they are checked by a trained boat inspector, and to check the lake near their property for unusual lake weeds. Check our website for contacts if you find something. Remember, if a boat inspector is present at a launch site, your boat must be inspected prior to entering the water.

After attending a Lakes and Rivers meeting last week along with a large number of Lake Association leaders, the AIS spread is not stabilizing and it is getting worse around the state. Recently new lakes from the top ten largest lakes in Minnesota have been infected with new AIS, creating changes to the fisheries. Starry Stonewort has now been found in Medicine Lake near the Twin Cities. If it spreads into the city lakes, there will be a new awareness of how serious this

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Dale Lundblad Memorial Edition

*Lundblad had over 40 years of service
to the Vermilion Lake Association.*

VLA honors former Board Member Dale Lundblad

On June 28, Dale Lundblad unexpectedly passed away at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. We would like to honor Dale with this edition of the newsletter.

Dale volunteered as a member of the Board of Directors for the Vermilion Lake Association / Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion for over 40 years – a period of time which will never be equaled. He held the positions of President and Vice President for many years. His long service shows his love for the lake and our mission “to protect and improve Lake Vermilion.” We cannot think of a more tireless effort by one person.

The lake and community lost a true champion who gave back in many ways. Dale and his wife Nan previously organized and edited our quarterly newsletter that is looked forward to by many members of the organization for its informative and creative articles about the lake. He recruited several of the existing



officers on the current board. Recently he coordinated our name change to Vermilion Lake Association. Speaking for our entire membership, we send our best wishes to Nan and the family at this very difficult time.

The Board of Directors - Vermilion Lake Association

President's Message....from page 2

AIS is. I also read that Starry is spreading throughout the states of Michigan and New York. Starry is an algae that grows from the shore out to 12 feet deep and is extremely thick, impacting the fishery and recreational activities.

Although spring has been quite cool and so have the water temperatures, I have heard of good fishing reports from the guides and local fishermen. It is time to enjoy the lake because the summer is short. Enjoy one of the most beautiful lakes in the state and country and check out a new part of the lake that you have not been to before and do not miss the picnic

sites that we maintain.

We have some new projects that we are considering and as always we are looking for volunteers or potential board members who would like the challenge of running a project or volunteering for an activity. Pat Michaelson is the person to contact if you have an interest. Contact Pat at plmichaelson@gmail.com. We would like to thank our large group of volunteers at the volunteer recognition party on August 27 at Camp Vermilion. Get to know all of the people volunteering to protect this lake.

Nesting on the loon platform



Sheri Sawatzky and Liz Dahl

Another year with the nesting platforms, hoping for success. VLA was given our third nesting platform from Kevin Kenow, 2019 annual meeting speaker. Shortly after the pair arrived back to the bay, Lauren towed out the platform to set. He placed it close to their natural nesting area. When he was towing to the spot he looked back and here was the pair coming to see what he was doing. Curious!! We notified the neighbor, so they were aware of the nest. So here it began

What an amazing May and June observing the behavior of two loons and their nest on the floating platform! The changing water levels of Lake Vermilion have been a challenge for the loons' nest at water's edge in past years but, thanks to the platform, not this year. With the help of binoculars, it was easy and fascinating to daily observe the loons. We viewed the platform 4-5 times each day and often with our grandchild.

Soon after the platform was placed, the loon got on and off the platform as though checking it out. We got excited and hopeful. Starting on May 16 there was a loon consistently sitting on the platform. We decided to create a calendar for our enjoyment with our grandchild. We marked the possible "due date" after reading that the normal incubation period is 26-28 days. Our binoculars did not allow us to see the eggs, but the loon's behavior could only mean

that it was protecting and keeping at least one egg warm. How dedicated the loon is to its eggs! It sat so still for hours. Its partner often ventured away on the lake and at times we couldn't even see where it was.



On May 22, a third loon appeared on the lake. The platform was left empty while one loon watched as two loons "fought" breast to breast, slapping each other with their wings as they almost stood on the water. One loon chased the other as though they could have taken flight but stayed along the top of the water. One loon started to fly and landed 100-200 yards away. We were relieved when the third loon left, and one loon returned to the platform. This incident left the nest empty for a few minutes. For the next couple of weeks, we would observe the loon occasionally leaving the platform for 2-3 minutes joining its partner 50-100 yards away from the platform. Each time I hoped the eggs were ok but watched the loon return, work itself onto the platform, move around slightly and spread out its body before laying down.

On June 3 and 4, the loon seemed to get on and off the platform more often and stay away longer, venturing further from the platform. On June 4, we looked out at the platform to see, rather than a loon on the platform, an eagle walking around. One loon was frantically swimming under and around the platform, splashing water, and calling out. The eagle appeared unfazed. For 1-2 minutes the eagle

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A Dog's Eyes

Several years ago, I read an article on how dogs are one of the few animals, in the animal kingdom, that enjoy eye contact with humans – particularly with their owners. If you stare at a wolf, fox or another canine he will see it as a threat. A dog on the other hand often welcomes your gaze into his or her eyes, much like the people around us that we love.

I began to notice this with our Australian Shepherd “Pauli”. She would not only welcome eye contact, I think she craved it. If I was with her in the fishing boat or just relaxing, reading by the fire or watching TV, she would sit at my feet and gaze at me. When I would return her gaze, she would perk up and welcome my eye contact. As she grew older, I think this bond only strengthened.



Dwight Warkentin
VLA Vice-President

Last Fall, Pauli developed cancer. But, as her body became weaker, she seemed to want my eye contact even more. On what turned out to be her last day, she intently watched me put together a piece of furniture. Upon completion, she looked at the chest, then at me as if to give her approval. I then took her for a walk. She collapsed. I held her as she peacefully died in my arms, all the while looking at me as if to say “it’s



OK”. I rushed her to the vet who told me the news I already knew. Even in death, her eyes were still open. As I placed her lifeless body into a box for cremation, I carefully closed her eyes, knowing I would never see them again.

For those of you who enjoy the companionship of a dog, remember to make eye contact. Your dog may want this as much as other affection you provide.

Loon nesting...from previous page

walked around the platform! We were certain the eggs were smashed and lost but curiously the loon went back on the platform almost immediately after the eagle left. For the next week when we looked a loon was on the platform and when it went off it stayed very close. The other loon was often nearby. To our amazement, on June 12 early in the morning we spotted a tiny baby exactly 26 days from when we observed the loon sitting steadily on the platform. Success!!!! Amazing! The parents stayed close together, one leaving only a short distance seeming to fish and bringing back something small for the baby to eat, maybe a minnow? One tiny baby got off the back of a loon and floated for a short time. On this first day they stayed close to the platform area but then moved on into the bay. The next day as they swam by our dock, I realized that in fact there were

two babies! We are left to wonder in amazement how the eggs survived the trampling of the eagle.

The platform looks lonely now, but it served its purpose and served it well.

Success!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Two of the three nests had loons sitting, however the loon abandoned the second nest, not sure why. Kevin Kenow thought too many curious boaters or black flies.

We want to acknowledge all the work that Mel Hintz has done to get the three nesting platforms. Mel has developed a great relationship with Kevin Kenow and his work with the loons. If not for Mel, we might not have our two new baby loons. Terry Grosshauser emailed Grandpa Mel to give him the good news on June 12.

Vermilion Lake Association proposed by-law changes

The Vermilion Lake Association Board of Directors proposes the following changes to the Association's By-laws. They will be presented to the Association's membership for approval at the 2019 annual meeting. The more significant changes are summarized below. A complete list of the changes will be available at the annual meeting and they will be published on our website at www.Vermilion-LakeAssociation.org/by-laws/.

❖ Increase the number of directors from fifteen (15) to eighteen (18). This will provide additional resources to help the Association with its initiatives to "Protect and Improve Lake Vermilion".

❖ Addition of an Indemnification Statement protecting Association Directors and Officers involved in litigation by reason of his or her position as a director officer of the Association.

❖ The President, with Board approval, may appoint a director-at-large for a one-year term.

❖ Establishment and maintenance of the night navigational aid system on Lake Vermilion will be deleted from the By-laws and included in the Association's Policies and Procedures.



Photo contest winner featured on this newsletter cover

The cover photo for this newsletter was submitted in the photo contest held last year for the Vermilion Lake Association's 50th anniversary. It was the second-place winner by Arny Engman. Arny and his wife Karen have owned a cabin on Norwegian Bay for twenty years and they love to kayak. This photo was taken early one morning on the lake. He said they were surprised that the loon did not dive as they came near, and then saw the baby ... a mother loon carrying a young loon on her back- very cute. Thanks to Arny and Karen for submitting this picture to the Lake Association.

51st Anniversary Meeting and Dinner on August 10

All Lake Vermilion members are invited to the 51st Annual Meeting for the Vermilion Lake Association organization. The annual meeting will be held at the Tower - Soudan Elementary School, 425 N 2nd St. in Tower. It will be on Saturday, August 10, 2019 and social hour will begin at 4:30 PM, buffet dinner at 5:30 PM, and 6:15 PM business meeting and featured speaker. There will also be a silent auction and raffle drawings.

The buffet dinner will be catered by North Gate Catering: Baked chicken, honey glazed ham, Swedish meatballs, mashed potatoes, gravy, buttered corn, coleslaw, desert and non-alcoholic beverages.

The cost for adults will be \$20 and children will be \$5.

There will be a short business meeting after the buffet dinner.

The speaker for the meeting will be Kevin Kenow, a Research Biologist from the U.S. Geological Survey. Kevin's presentation will be "Unraveling Mysteries of the Common Loon." Kevin's research has focused on developing common loon conservation strategies using unique technology to look at migration and foraging patterns of common loons breeding in the upper Midwest. I am sure you will thoroughly enjoy this presentation.

Seating is limited to 200, so please RSVP early as we expect to sell out.

Please indicate if you have dietary restrictions.

To RSVP for this meeting, please contact one of the following:

❖ Lori Ptak - 612-247-3751

❖ Jim Graham - 218-780-5525

❖ Terrie Hiemann - 218-753-2162

❖ By email- RSVP@VermilionLakeAssociation.org

If you RSVP by email, be sure to receive a confirmation.

If you RSVP and decide to cancel, please call or email your cancellation. Thank you and the board is looking forward to seeing everyone.

Members and out of town guests are welcome. Memberships are available at the door. Vacation attire.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

The VLA is seeking a new volunteer to assist with boat launch traffic data analysis.

Excel expertise a must. Volunteer remotely or locally. About 2 hours per week this summer/fall.

This is a terrific opportunity to GET INVOLVED and share your volunteer skills.

Contact Pat Michaelson at plmichaelson@gmail.com.



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Cameras Measure Traffic at Vermilion Public Accesses

To better protect Lake Vermilion from aquatic invasive species (AIS), trail cameras are being used at Vermilion's 17 public watercraft accesses to measure launch traffic. Knowing where and when boats launch is key to improving the efficiency of Vermilion's AIS boat inspection program.



Jeff Lovgren
VLA Board Member

In 2018, our AIS prevention team began a two-year project to maximize inspection efficiency. The task is easy to describe: Develop the knowledge to predict launch traffic in advance and deploy AIS inspectors at the busiest accesses at the busiest times of the day for the entire season.

We have good historical traffic data for accesses staffed by inspectors in prior years. The time-stamped photos from the trail cameras help "fill

in the blanks" for unstaffed accesses and for early morning and late evening traffic at all accesses.

Cameras are moved between accesses frequently. Accesses with active cameras are marked with a blue "Public Notice" sign.

Vermilion's traffic analysis project is a partnership between the Vermilion Lake Association and North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District. The effort is funded by grants from the Initiative Foundation and from St. Louis County's AIS Prevention Program.

For additional information about AIS prevention at Lake Vermilion, contact Jeff Lovgren at lovgren.jeff@gmail.com or go to VermilionLakeAssociation.org.

How to report suspicious vegetation found in Lake Vermilion

Jeff Lovgren,
VLA Board Member

Early detection of new aquatic invasive species (AIS) infestations is a team effort. The key to our success is property owners, lake visitors, volunteer access sentries, and AIS Detectors all working together.

Because our highest priority threats are vegetation that tends to become first established where introduced, be especially vigilant at Vermilion's public and private accesses.

Please report any suspicious aquatic vegetation or invertebrates which you do not recognize as native to Lake Vermilion to our AIS Detector team. Contact our AIS hotline by either email or phone at:

- ❖ AIS@VermilionLakeAssociation.org
- ❖ 218-288-1080.



A member of our AIS Detector team – listed below – will get back to you promptly.

Jim Graham- jcgrahamsr@gmail.com

Bob McNamara- bob@bobmcnamara.com

Mary McNellis- mmcnellis@stcroixre.com

Wayne Suoja- wsuoja@frontiernet.net

Vermilion Lake Association Caps Now Available



They're here! Wear your new caps proudly to show your support for your lake association. The price is right: \$15, plus \$3 shipping for any number of caps to one address. Free local pickup. Check out the three style choices at our website VermilionLakeAssociation.org/caps.

For more info, contact Sheri Sawatzky at 218-666-5512 or email sherisawatzky@gmail.com.



Take the grandkids geocaching at Lake Vermilion

[This article was originally published in the February 2015 issue of The Vermilion Sportsman, the predecessor to this newsletter].

I'm always looking for activities to keep the grandkids busy when they visit us at the lake. Fishing, swimming, boating and horsing around with your cousins are usually enough to fill most days, but now and then they're looking for something different to do.

A few years ago, we dreamed up a game. The grandkids would sit on the bench at the end of the dock



and I'd hide a red rubber ball somewhere on or near our property. I used my GPS receiver to record a waypoint (longitude and latitude) of the hiding spot and the kids would then take my GPS and try to find it. The GPS receiver provided the general direction to the hidden ball and indicated if they were getting warmer or colder (remember the old kids' game) as they moved about.

The official name for this game is GEOCACHING. Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunt. Instead of a paper map with a big "X" marking the location of the treasure, you're given the specific longitude and latitude for the treasure's location and use a GPS receiver to find it. In keeping with the treasure idea, hidden caches typically contain some trinkets, and

you can exchange an item you've brought on the hunt for one out of the cache.

Geocaching is a game made for kids (and grandpas, too). First, kids today are very technology savvy so electronic things like a GPS receiver are nothing new or mysterious. An electronic game that requires the player to move is also a plus. Second, it's not always obvious where the cache is hidden once you're near its location. Hide and seek is a favorite kids' game. Next, what kid doesn't like a hike in the woods? And boating to reach the geocache is just icing on the cake. Finally, discovering what treasures are hidden in the cache and deciding which treasure to take in trade can be a challenging experience, especially when it requires negotiation with your siblings and cousins.

Over the years we have expanded our geocaching horizons to include searching for those hidden by others around the Lake Vermilion area. The grandkids mention it every year when they first arrive, and they can find the same ones year after year and enjoy it each time. We've had the good fortune of having a steady supply of younger grandkids adding their inexperience and excitement to the repeated quests.

Last summer my lake neighbor Del Cecchi and I constructed our own geocache under the direction of our collective band of grandkids. The goal was to make the cache "little kid friendly." The geocache needed to be accessible and relatively easy to spot. Our chosen weather-proof geocache container was a capped length of white PVC drain pipe.

Keeping with tradition, our geocache contains some instructions, a log book, and, of course, treasures. (The youngest members of our geocache hiding team wanted to keep all the little punch-out glider airplanes and not leave any in the pipe.) A search team of 12, ages 2 to 11, helped select the perfect location. The 2-year-old did need help crawling over some downed trees.



I obtained permission from the LaCroix Ranger District to hide the geocache in our chosen spot on Superior National Forest land and registered the name "Wakemup Grandkids," description and location on a geocache website. We've been back periodically to check on the cache and the kids were very excited to see the names of visitors entered in the log book. Of course, checking out the newly-added trinkets was the best part!

If geocaching with your grandkids, or any age lake visitor, interests you, the location of geocaches in the Lake Vermilion area can be found at geocaching.com. Create a free account, choose a destination, and have fun!

A new home...a new life

My name is Penny Jackson and I grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota, the middle child in a family of five. Dad, Mom, older brother and a younger sister. Life was always an adventure, playing in the fenced yard, or traveling around the block to see friends.

For almost 20 years prior to an early retirement, I worked in a very large suburban church as their Office Ministry Coordinator. I was the first person you would meet when walking through the door or calling on the phone. My job also included the publishing of many printed forms, bulletins, brochures, newsletters etc. I feel my biggest accomplishment in this position was to start writing and using my communication skills to inform others.



Penny Jackson
Author and
VLA Volunteer

One day, out of the blue, my husband shared his lifelong dream with me. That dream was to build a Log Cabin on Lake Vermilion. I immediately said, "Yes, this could be my dream also." Even as I said yes, there was a list of unanswered questions and thoughts running through my mind. "What about our family and friends? It was a long drive to Tower and Lake Vermilion. I did like the area the few times we visited. But to move and start a new life? I won't know anyone. Will I be able to make new friends?" The answer to all my questions was "YES." Many opportunities and friendships were just waiting for me.

While waiting for our log home to be completed on Pike Bay, I read a notice in both local newspapers that rehearsals for the Community Christmas Concert would be taking place at the Tower school. I love to sing, and my husband knew how important it was to me, so we got in the car and he drove me almost four hours so I could attend the first rehearsal. Each week that I showed up I met more and more people. Through these new friends many doors to volunteering opportunities became avail-

able and many more friendships were made.

It has been almost two years since we moved into our cabin on beautiful Lake Vermilion. I have truly loved every minute of it. The sunsets over the lake. The call of the loons. The many wild birds and animals that walk or fly by our home each day. The heavy snow that turns balsam limbs into beautiful lacy snow-scapes. And let's not forget the magic and music of the lake as it gives up its ice for springtime.

I trusted my husband, not only with my heart, but also with my life. We made the right move and have made many new friends by volunteering. By just showing up and giving of yourself, new friendships will be made. This makes life worth living.

Looking for something to do? Want to make some lifelong friends? Try volunteering for the Vermilion Lake Association. They have plenty of opportunities available or develop your own, like I did with my writing. It's easy, just contact Pat Michaelson, Volunteer Program Leader at plmichaelson@gmail.com or check out the website at <https://www.vermilionlake-association.org>.

Is your Membership Current ???



You can check your current enrollment status off the newsletter mailing label. We want to make it easy for you to know if your membership dues are up to date. The first line indicates your status.

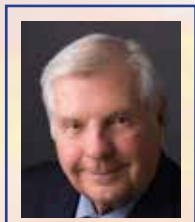
For example, "Member 2019" indicates our records show you're paid through calendar year 2019.

Please email or call me with mailing address or email address changes.

Sheri Sawatzky, Chair Membership Records
sherisawatzky@gmail.com or 218-780-8178

Summertime...

With help from the voices of Porgy & Bess, Sinatra, and Otis Redding...feel free to hum along.



Tom Aro
VLA member

"Summertime and the livin' is easy,

Fish are jumpin'....and the cotton is high.

Oh your daddy's rich and your momma good lookin,

So hush little baby don't you cry...."

Ah yes, this too is our summer song... livin' easy, all the day long.

Trollin' the Lake for golden walleye... sippin' a cold-one as cotton-ball clouds drift by.

Old men tellin' sons & daughters of the Lake's moods and mystery,

Their eyes and their ears like sponges, soppin-up this new-learned history.

So hush little baby don't you cry.

"The summer wind, come blowin' in from across the sea.

It lingered there to touch your hair and walk with me.

All summer long we sang a song and then we strolled the golden strand..."

Two sweethearts and the summer wind."

We too have been blessed and caressed by summer winds.

Our stories of old, warmly blow by... but ours alone, to hold with a sigh.

Oh, those warm faces and times of yore....they always remain, ours always, evermore.

Yes, yes, maybe our wind's so old..... but oh so sweet, more precious then gold.

"I'm sittin on the dock of the bay

Watchin' the tide roll away, ooh

I'm just sittin' on the dock of the bay....

Wastin' time..."

No! No! No! Otis!

Sittin' on the dock is not wasting time!

It is private time, your time alone, not some kind of test, simply a time to give it a rest.

Time for a break from life's crazy commotion...to a softer place....of gentle slow-motion.

Erase all the double talk, escape from the hammerlock, remove any stumbling block!

It is your time to listen, and embrace the small waves, as they lap at your dock,

Keeping their time, like nature's metronome, like nature's clock.

The mind in synch, bobbing 'tween the soft splays. Any tides' weights? They roll away.

Ahh!!...SUMMERTIME on Vermilion....priceless.

Summer 2019



Musky fishing: What it means to our younger generation anglers

Ed Tausk, Vermilion Dam Lodge

As most might be aware Lake Vermilion has earned the reputation as being one of the top musky lakes in the country. It is a rare lake that has the right stuff (size, forage, habitat) to produce a true trophy-size musky over 40 pounds. To some who are not familiar with Muskies or ever fished for them, that statement might not mean much. Many non-musky anglers might consider musky a species that has no value to a lake and feel intimidated by their size and power. In Minnesota, the DNR has received resistance to stocking and expanding musky fishing for the anglers. Much of the resistance to expanding musky lakes in the state is fueled by rumors, misconceptions and myths about how muskies impact a lake. One example is the myth that muskies eat too many walleyes and will hurt the walleye population. For the reality of that myth, one can look at some of the top walleye fish-

eries in Minnesota to find lakes like Winnibigoshish, Lake of the Woods, Leech, Cass, Mille Lacs, and Bemidji all have native musky populations.

In general muskies are a low density species where there are very few per surface acre of water vs other species. Regardless, musky anglers develop a passion to catch a musky, driven by the challenge and odds that are tilted against them to succeed. For most musky anglers a good day of musky fishing is just having the opportunity to simply locate and see a musky follow up their bait to the boat.

To be successful in musky fishing, anglers must have dedication, a drive to succeed, and the ability to adapt to unforeseen circumstances to accomplish their goal. When you think about those qualities it would be great to see more of our younger

Continued on next page

generations pick them up and carry through their lives. Fortunately, musky fishing is actually one of the fastest growing interests in young anglers. In Minnesota there are state-wide clubs, organizations and high schools that provide our youth access to musky fishing.

There are several high schools that participate in a series of competition events that leads up to the State Championship Tournament. The tournament rules include catch and release and a regulated fishing time of eight hours on the water. Given most of these kids have never fished Vermilion prior this provides a very challenging task for these young contestants.

For the parents and sponsors who come out to watch this event, this tournament provides an opportunity to see firsthand the excitement and passion musky fishing is bringing to the young anglers who come each year. This year's event was held on June 19. Nineteen boats participated and two muskies were boated including several nice northern pike. Mar-



ryn Willberg and Tia Hickman, both seniors from Bemidji High School, were the winners of the 2019 Minnesota State Musky Tournament with their 41-inch muskie.

For those of us who love and value the sport of musky fishing our hope is those who have never fished them or understood the attraction will be open to learning more about this great species and help preserve the sport for future generations.

Board of Directors and Officers 2018-2019

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In Memoriam...

The Vermilion Lake Association regularly receives donations in memory of loved ones or friends.

We are grateful for these gifts and also wish to honor those who have passed away:

Helen Morturano

John & Ruth Stapleton

Pam Clines

Rudy Schutte

Dr. Martin G. Stuck

Patrick McDermott

Mike McCormick

Leah Carr

Beverlee Lofquest Hinsa

Marion Sederstrom

Dale Lundblad

Donations

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To accommodate a wide range of donor interests, the Vermilion

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Shore Lunch Site Improvement Fund: Gifts to this fund are used to improve and maintain Lake Vermilion's eight shore lunch sites.

How to Make a Donation

If you'd like to send a check, please make it payable to the "Vermilion

Lake Association, Inc." and mail to the address below. If you wish, you may direct your donation to a specific fund.

All gifts are appreciated and acknowledged. Please include your name, email, and mailing address.

If this is a memorial gift, please let us know who the gift is in memory/in honor of.

Vermilion Lake Association, Jerry Lepper, Treasurer, P.O. Box 696, Tower, MN 55790

Donate online at <https://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/get-involved/donate/>

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Rob Joki
VLA Board Member

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eligible purchases to the Vermilion Lake Association.

Our lake association has been working for 51 years to protect Lake Vermilion for all who live and play here. Explore our website. You'll see our top priorities today are fisheries management and aquatic invasive species prevention.

Thinking outside the (tackle) box

John Yocum, VLA Board Member

Most of us who fish are creatures of habit. We go back to the same fishing spots; and use the same tackle and time-honored techniques that have worked well for us in the past. But when the Information Age came along in the 1990s, the internet opened up a whole new world of possibilities on how to fish. In this article, I will discuss some of my favorite places on the world wide web to pick up some new ideas for fishing Lake Vermilion, and discuss some practical applications which resulted from using a web-based resource.



John Yocum shows off a bass he caught using a lure (pictured above) he had read about online.



plating and updated information on aquatic invasive species. Lake Vermilion is frequently mentioned.

One excellent You Tube video I found that brought a wealth of new ideas is called Tactics for Devils Lake Walleyes, produced by Minnesota native Jon Thelen in the Fish Ed series. This video focuses on showing the viewer how to use crawlers and leeches in

One of my favorite series of videos on You Tube is called "Fishing The Arrowhead." A group of talented young fellows from northeastern Minnesota have produced this outstanding collection of videos targeting different species on many of the lakes in the Arrowhead region. Lake Vermilion is featured in several videos. They not only share techniques and methods, but also share spots on various lakes where they have had success catching fish.

My personal favorite video from this series is called "Fishing The Arrowhead: Lost Lake." They capture the essence of what our little 780-acre neighbor to the south has to offer, and that is eater-sized, natural-reproduction walleye. During the video, one of the young men fishes with natural bait and the other uses a jig. They very unselfishly share with the viewer that the best place to fish is the north end of that lake and the best time to go is in the evening, when the walleye congregate there to feed. I have used some of their techniques on Lake Vermilion in places in popular, well-known hot spots like the entrance to Everett Bay during the late summer.

VLA Vice-President Dwight Warkentin shared with me another outstanding website <https://fishingminnesota.com/>. This particular site can best be described as an aggregator of news on fishing in Minnesota. A wide variety of timely and topical issues are discussed such as changes the DNR is contem-

spinner harnesses slowly trolled over areas of Devils Lake in North Dakota that contain drop-offs and ledges, i.e. rapid transitions between shallow and deep water. Thelen gets into some really great specific details; for example, he shows the viewer exactly how to rig a crawler in the spinner harness so it doesn't bunch up on the main hook or stinger hook. He employs an underwater camera during trolling that allows the viewer to observe and study how the bait swims. Although the video is a relatively short 7 to 8 minutes long, it is packed with information on walleye fishing presentations and techniques that are applicable to our lake. I frequently use this technique in the summer in areas in Lake Vermilion where the drop-offs and ledges occur, when the lake is full of food and a more aggressive presentation is needed other than a Lindy rig with a half-crawler. Another excellent series of videos, also based out of Devils Lake, North Dakota, is produced by legendary guide Jason Mitchell. He frequently incorporates shots from underwater cameras in his videos that show walleye stalking the lures that he is featuring.

I caught the bass in the accompanying photo in Everett Bay using a spinnerbait-jig hybrid lure that was specifically designed and marketed for redfish (also known as red drum), which is a species of salt-water fish found in shallow, brackish-water estuaries in the

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Deep hole fishing: tips and tricks

Steve Amundson, VLA Member

Spring and fall come and go quickly sometimes, but the one thing that stays consistent is the deep hole bite! The early and late season fishing can be some of the best fishing of the year. These time frames produce some of the highest numbers of fish all year.

During a typical Vermilion spring, the average ice out is late April/early May. That being said, fishing opener always has colder water temps, which in turn can guarantee anglers a few different bite patterns that hold true. The shallow bite and deep hole bite. The shallow fish are the spawning fish, and the deep fish are either done spawning or haven't moved in yet to spawn.

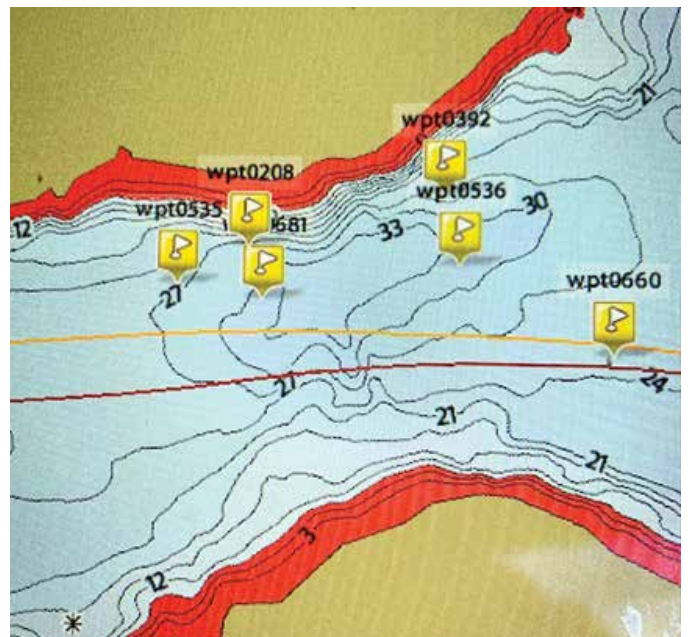
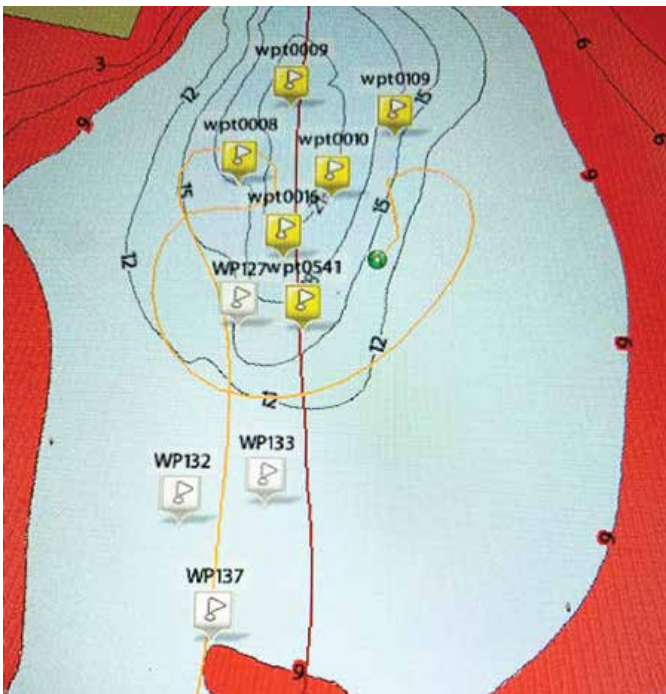
Concentrating on "The Deep Hole" bite pattern, there are a couple things to look for:

- ❖ Sand/gravel flats
- ❖ Neck downs/pinches
- ❖ Big water adjacent to the pinches

These are all typical locations for spring/fall walleyes. There isn't a certain depth that we're looking for that



holds the key to success, each basin and spot is different. For example...you might be fishing in 30 feet in one spot, but 20 feet in the next. The one thing that remains consistent is the "deep hole" status. I typically look for a sand flat that tapers down to a neck down. In a spot like this, the flat might be 18-20 feet deep and the hole might be 32-34 feet deep at the center. Another option is a shallower flat that has a 10-14 feet flat that has a hole that bottoms out at 22 feet. These are examples of classic deep hole spots.





Lure options/ suggestions

❖ Jig-tipped with a minnow or soft plastics... Oddball, MoonEye, Googleye Jigs

❖ Lindy rigs- tipped with a minnow... I like to use colored Gamakatsu #4 hooks

❖ Rapala Jigging Raps/Moonshine Shiver Minnows

When working the deep holes, speed is an important factor! The deeper you get the more weight you need at a higher speed. When Lindy rigging, I like the .5mph mark with 3/8 walking or egg sinker, 4-6 feet snell, and colored hooks. If you use monofilament for your regular line and the snell, try 10 lb. braided line with a monofilament leader...this will increase sensitivity. If you can't feel the sinker hitting bottom, you're going too fast. You should be able to see your line get slack when dropping the sinker on the bottom. When jigging I like a crawling speed, or better yet "anchor mode/spot lock" on Minnkota Trolling motors. As far as trolling motors go, this is the way to go and will change your fishing life! Minnows



can be a big part of your spring success. The size of the minnow can change your entire day. On many occasions, a tough or finicky bite can be cured by upsizing your bait, so don't be afraid to throw the biggest minnow in the bucket on your hook. Another important factor when fishing the deep hole is hook sets: try not to give the fish line and reel slow. This is important for the fish health and failure to do so will result in gut hooked fish and air bladders rupturing. You'll miss more fish than normal, but it's better for the fishery.

Late August, you'll want to start looking in the flats around the holes as the fish will start staging to move back in for the fall deep hole bite! It's a fun bite and there are many spots on the Big V that hold these characteristics! Start the planning process and do a little research on the spots you'd like to check out!

Steve Amundson operates Spring Bay Resort and Guide Service and can be contacted at 218-780-5941.

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southern states. I watched a video of anglers using it, and thought it looked like something that might work in the shallow, weedy bays like Everett, Stuntz and Greenwood in Lake Vermilion in the summer – places where a spinner bait and a jig work well. Many different species seem to like it: smallmouth, largemouth, northerns, jumbo perch and walleyes. The bottom line here is that if something is designed for

another type of fishing and it looks like it might work on Lake Vermilion, it probably will.

I hope this piece has sparked an interest in using the internet as adjunctive tool for those of you who haven't used it. For those who regularly use it, I hope that you have gleaned a few new resources to check out.



Vermilion Lake Association

PO Box 696

Tower MN 55790

Volunteers Make the Difference

The Vermilion Lake Association has been fortunate over the years to have a dedicated group of leaders and volunteers to staff our important activities. We are grateful for their help.

Please consider joining this team. We have needs for both workers and leaders, for those with only a few hours to spare, and for those who can make a larger time commitment.

If you think you may be interested, please contact Pat Michaelson, VLA Volunteer Program Leader, at 612-306-7702 (cell) or plmichaelson@gmail.com.

Vermilion Lake Association

Sheri Sawatzky, Member Records • P.O. Box 696 • Tower MN 55790

sherisawatzky@gmail.com • 218-666-5512

Membership year runs from Jan 1st through Dec 31st

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Please clip or copy this form and send to the address above.

Become a Member

Join those who love Lake Vermilion as much as you do. Help us continue the many activities you've just read about.

Not sure? Check us out at our website VermilionLakeAssociation.org. We're pretty sure you'll like our vision for the future and the work we have underway now to make Lake Vermilion even better.

Please mail a check with the form on this page or join at our website using PayPal or a credit card.

The Vermilion Lake Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Do You Qualify?

Trick question. Anyone can join the lake association whose mission it is to protect and improve Lake Vermilion. No need to be a property owner. No need to be a fisherman or a kayaker. Just someone who cares about our great lake and wants to protect her for the next generation.