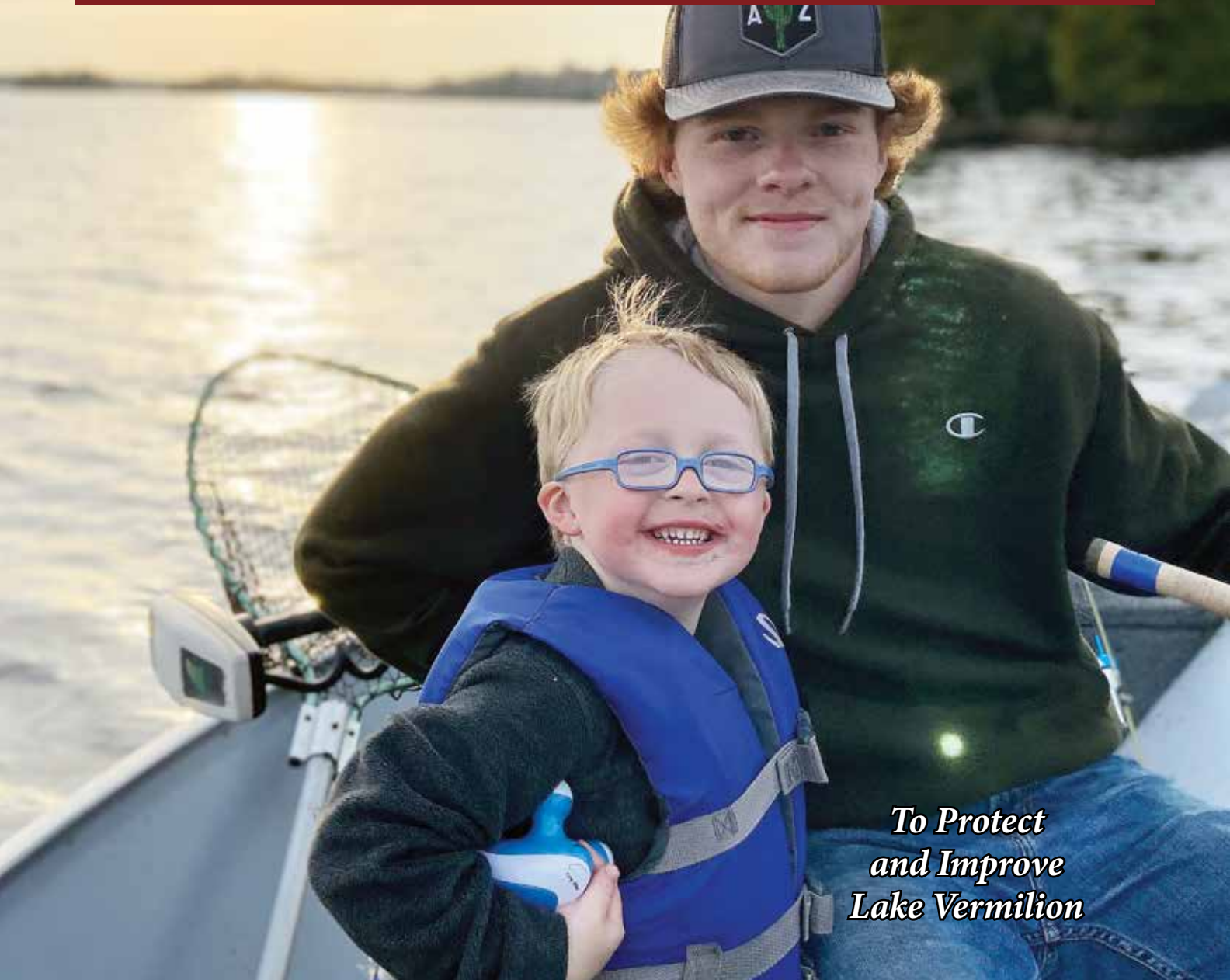


THE VERMILION



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*To Protect
and Improve
Lake Vermilion*

IN THIS ISSUE

Boating safety...page 3

AIS updates...page 4

From lawn to pollinators...page 6

Enter our 2022 photo contest...page 9

2022 Vermilion Fisheries report...page 10

Recipe: Deep-fried Coconut Pike...page 16

Remembering Dick Weber...page 17

Take a Vet fishing...page 22

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy Spring, Lake Friends and Neighbors,
CLEAN those BOATS....all season long!



Pat Michaelson
VLA President

That's our mantra for keeping this beautiful lake free from Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS). For many of us, our boats and other watercraft rarely leave Vermilion and have been cleaned and safely stored all winter. But I'll bet most of you, like us, have visitors coming to enjoy the lake from now until late fall...and many of them bring their own boats, canoes, kayaks etc. VLA's data indicates our greatest risk for introduction of new AIS is boats and other watercraft coming from an infested lake. Our AIS Prevention Program grant, in partnership with St. Louis County, will again provide funds for boat inspectors at many of our public launches. We need to do our part as well. As we all prepare for summer visitors or resort guests launching at a public or private access, please ensure they have Cleaned Those Boats...all season long!

You'll find this edition of our newsletter is filled with an abundance of information about our numerous evolving programs.

VLA Member Dock Signs is a new project we are excited about, led by member volunteer Steve Lenertz. These sturdy 12"x18" aluminum signs, at a cost of just \$20, attach to the lower front of our docks to acknowledge member support of our key message...to protect and improve. Most of our local dock installers are partnering with us to attach them at no additional cost with dock installation.

Another major program our Board is enthused to be expanding involves Water Quality. Under the leadership of Craig Beveroth, a plan for increased water sampling will be launched. Craig will be working with our volunteers who currently do sampling in partnership with the MPCA several times during the summer. We'll be increasing that sampling to include a broader range of chemicals in several locations on the lake. Donations we've received, dedicated to Water Quality, will help fund this important initiative.

Our Live Loon NestCam, now in its second year, will be ready for viewing soon after ice out when our loons arrive and immediately seek out their typical nesting site. We're hopeful they will return to this protected site they've used for several years, and provide some serene viewing and learning opportunities for all.

Also in its second year, our Lake Steward Program continues to grow.....and we encourage more of you to join. We have 15 properties who qualified for the award last year, and several more working towards the designation. We'll be presenting the remainder of the signs recognizing the achievement in the next few weeks. As you cruise the lake, look for the signs and note the variety of ways we can enhance our shorelines to protect and improve.

For those eagerly awaiting the fishing opener, our Fisheries team continues to encourage our Conservation Fishing guidelines. If you don't have an informational card, find them at one of our area business partners or reach out to a Board member. Each spring Matt Hennen, Large Lake Biologist-Lake Vermilion from the Tower DNR team, shares the latest fisheries update with our Board and is included in this edition. We always learn something new with his extensive experience over the last several years.

Mark your calendars now for our Annual Meeting to be held Saturday, August 6. Keith Reeves, the new DNR Supervisor in Tower, will share his passion for birding, highlighting several species in our region...with likely some new or little-known facts!

Continued on next page

Boating Safety

Ah, the snow has melted, the countryside is lush and green....and spring is here. Time to think about open water season on Lake Vermilion and prepare the boat to go back in the water. Now is also a good time to review Minnesota's boating safety laws. This article will provide a list of some great resources to help you do just that.

The Minnesota DNR has a very comprehensive section on boating safety on its website. <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/safety/boatwater/index.html>. This extensive data base has a wide range of rich and diverse topics such as life jacket requirements, child life jacket laws, boating etiquette, cold water dangers and waterfowl boating safety.... and these are just a few examples of what's available.



John Yocum
VLA Board Member

There is a great 5-minute video on YouTube that discusses boating safety issues specific to Lake Vermilion. This includes programs undertaken by the Association and others like buoy and marker placement to help boaters avoid perils such as hitting rocks in the lake. This video was produced by Ed Tausk, owner of Vermilion Dam Lodge, in 2016. It's well worth any Lake Vermilion boater's time to watch it, particularly those coming to enjoy Lake Vermilion for the first time. The web address is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LsW2LQ27Q0Y>. From time-to-time, boating safety classes are offered in the Tower and Cook areas by organizations such as the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. We will post information relating to this topic on our website as well

President's Message...from previous page

As always, I'll end with encouragement to join in one of our programs as a VLA volunteer. While we typically hold our volunteer recognition in August, we're going to change it up this year, and have a Volunteer Team Gathering in late June. With our volunteer numbers growing and COVID restrictions the last two years, many of you have not had the opportunity to meet others on your respective team. You can do that at this upcoming event in late June. Watch for your email invitation in a few weeks.



as the VLA Facebook page as it becomes available. The DNR also offers online classes in boating safety available at <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/> and search for "Boat and Water Safety Education."

Lastly, all the resources that are mentioned in this article are included in the Boating Safety section on the Vermilion Lake Association's website. To navigate to this section, click first on Other Programs in the toolbar at the top of the homepage. In addition to the resources discussed above, there is a link to the U.S. Coast Guard's page on boating safety and the boating safety pages of many other organizations.

Enjoy this glorious spring at the lake...with its new beginnings, a feast for the senses, and balm for the soul.

CLEAN those BOATS...all season long!

Pat Michaelson, VLA President and Volunteer Program Leader

**Cover Photo by Nathan Anderson,
VLA Member, 2020 Photo Contest Entrant**

Lake Vermilion 2022 AIS Prevention Funding Approved

The St. Louis County Commissioners have approved a grant of \$30,800 for 2022 to the Vermilion Lake Association (VLA) in support of preventing the introduction of aquatic invasive species (AIS) within Lake Vermilion. The VLS's prevention program includes six projects with special emphasis on monitoring for new infestations, public education, and watercraft inspections.



Nancy Watkins
VLA Board Member/
AIS Co-Leader

"The VLA Board appreciates the AIS funding it has received over the years from St Louis County," said Pat Michaelson, president of the 2,700-member lake association. "We could not do this without their generous support."

"The risk of introducing an aquatic invasive species is of great concern," said Nancy Watkins, co-chair of the Association's AIS program. "It is estimated that about 16,000 boats are launched each year at Vermilion. Not only is there a serious threat of introducing vegetation such as Eurasian watermilfoil and starry stonewort but also species such as zebra mussels. Approximately three percent of Minnesota's lakes have already become infested with zebra mussels. Given the increasing boat traffic entering Vermilion at its 17 public and 23 private accesses, we must be extremely vigilant to do all we can to protect the lake, its fisheries, its recreational boating, its property

owners, and the business community."

One of the key components of the VLA's activities for 2022 will be increasing the number of boat inspections at Vermilion's resorts. Resorts attract many visitors from out of state and regions in Minnesota with AIS infestations which provide a threat to the lake.

"Funding is extremely important to achieve the VLA's objectives. However, its mission would not be possible without our army of AIS volunteers who donated over 1,500 hours in 2021," said Michaelson, who organizes VLA's volunteer team. "Their efforts allow us to stretch our funding much farther."

"Strong partnerships make this difficult and complex task possible," continued Michaelson. "We are pleased with the close working relationship that has developed among our lake association, the Lake Vermilion Resort Association, North St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District, the Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, and the business community around Lake Vermilion."

Additional information about the Lake Vermilion 2022 AIS program can be found at the VLA website www.VermilionLakeAssociation.org under the "AIS Prevention" tab. If you'd like to join the VLA volunteer team, please contact Pat Michaelson, plmichaelson@gmail.com.

New AIS Coordinator

Kelsea Goettl is the new AIS Program Coordinator for North St. Louis SWCD. Kelsea has a bachelor's degree in environmental science with a natural resource conservation concentration and an emphasis in GIS (geographic information systems) and a minor in plant science. Kelsea's work experience includes coordinating the Arizona watercraft inspection and decontamination program at Lake Powell, working as an AIS technician (as an intern) for the St. Croix River Association in MN and WI. She also has several years of retail customer service experience. Kelsea has volunteered her time to conduct invasive species control with both the Wisconsin DNR and the National Park Service.



Opportunities to Increase Your Knowledge

One of the goals of the Vermilion Lake Association is to provide public education regarding ways to protect our lake. There are two educational opportunities that may be of interest to become better informed about aquatic invasive species (AIS) and to join our team of “detectorists.”

AIS Management 101 is a course offered by the AIS Detectors program at the University of Minnesota which is jointly supported by the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) and University of Minnesota Extension. It is open to anyone, including residents of other states, though certain portions of the course, such as permitting regulations, will include information specific to Minnesota.

The fully online course debuted in 2020 and returned in 2021. Course participants engage with multimedia learning materials detailing a range of topics including aquatic invasive species regulations, target species, management options, monitoring strategies and more. The course was offered again in January of 2022. The course is self-paced with 7 modules. Total time to complete the course is 12 to 15 hours. Of particular value is the questions asked by class participants with a wide range of backgrounds which are then answered by faculty. Class fee is \$85. To register, go to <https://maiscrc.umn.edu/> and look for “AIS Detectors” then AIS Management 101.



MINNESOTA AQUATIC INVASIVE
SPECIES RESEARCH CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM

Another opportunity is the AIS Detectors Core Course which is an introduction to aquatic invasive species, identification and surveillance. You will learn how to report invasive species, best practices for preventing the spread of AIS, relevant rules and regulations, and how to search for AIS on your own.

To become a detectorist there is a self-paced online course which can be done from your home which takes 6-8 hours. Next is the completion of several pre-workshop activities which take approximately 1-2 hours. Finally there is a 3-hour virtual workshop led by Detectors staff where you'll apply the knowledge and skills that you learned in the online course. Both the online course and virtual workshop include open-book knowledge assessment on which you must score 70-percent or higher to successfully complete the training and be certified with the program. It is a wonderful opportunity and your expertise would be a welcome addition to our team of “detectorists.” To access this course, go to <https://maiscrc.umn.edu/>, then “AIS Detectors”, then “Become a Detector”.

Help protect Lake Vermilion by using Amazon



Jerry Lepper
VLA Treasurer

I would like to thank all of those who used Amazon Smile during this past year. I especially enjoyed reading your notes sent in with Membership

Renewals stating how you were using Amazon Smile as much as possible when shopping.

When you shop at Amazon, go to the amazon website, designating Vermilion Lake Association as your charity: <https://smile.amazon.com/charity?orig=%2F>

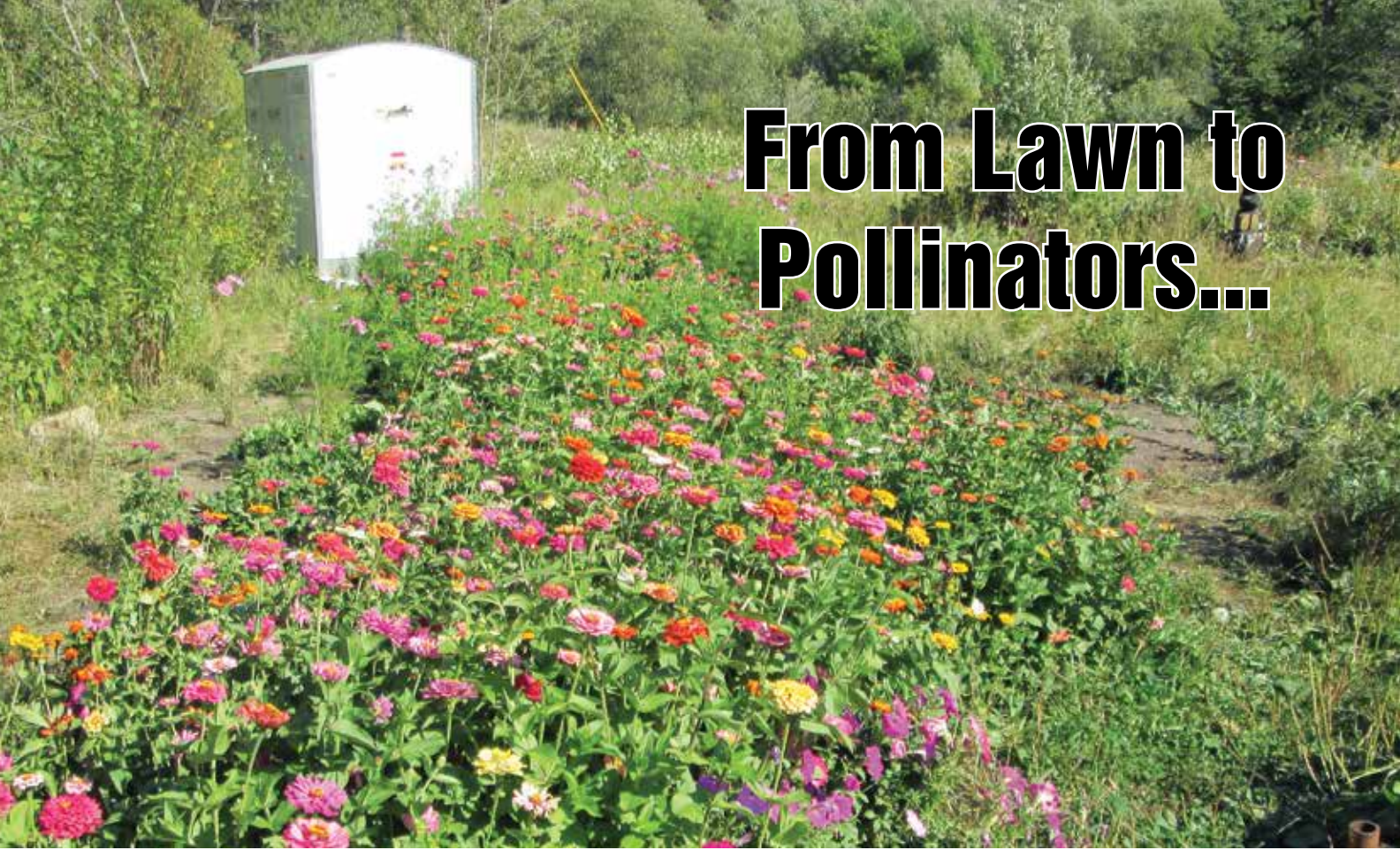


If you have started to shop at Amazon.com and then remember you want to use Smile, leave everything in your shopping cart, log off Amazon and then log back in using Smile.Amazon.com. Your purchases will still be in your shopping cart and Vermilion Lake Association will receive the Amazon

half-percent donation on qualifying purchases.

As of March 2022, VLA has received \$1,337.53 from your generous participation in Amazon Smile. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

From Lawn to Pollinators...



Your grass may be greener than your neighbors, but at what price? ⁽¹⁾ Do you apply 2,4-D, one of the most extensively used herbicides in the world which is a constituent of Agent Orange to your lawn? “Annual sales of 2,4-D have surpassed \$300 million worldwide, and it’s found in “Weed and Feed” products like Scotts Weed and Feed, Ortho Weed B Gon, Salvo, Weedone, and Spectracide.” ⁽²⁾



Wayne Suoja
VLA Board Member

“A 1986 National Cancer Institute (NIC) study found that farmers exposed to 2,4-D for 20 or more days a year had a sixfold higher risk of developing non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma. Another NCI study showed that dogs were twice as likely to contract lymphoma if their owners used 2,4-D on their lawns. This compound also tends to accumulate inside people’s homes even days after the lawn has been sprayed. After 2,4-D was sprayed, exposure levels for children were ten times higher than before the lawns were treated—an indication of how easily the chemical is tracked inside on the little feet of dogs, cats, and kids.” ⁽³⁾

Another negative side effect of spraying herbicides on your lawn is that it kills weeds like clover while it preserves grass. As we all know, clover pulls nitrogen out of the air and fixes it to the soil. Without the clover, the soil could become nitrogen poor and fail to support plant life. So now homeowners who used to get nitrogen for free will now pay for synthetic nitrogen. In our watersheds, nitrogen runoff is considered among the worst problems for water quality. Synthetic fertilizers are water soluble, and will run off your lawn after a rain. “Doused with chemicals, algae grow to create “algae blooms” that, as they decay and die, suck oxygen out of rivers, lakes, and bays and could lead to massive “dead zones” in which neither fish nor plants can survive.” ⁽⁴⁾

A toxic lawn is also devastating to bird populations. “An estimated 72 million birds are killed each year by direct exposure to pesticides, a number that does not include baby birds that perish because a parent died from pesticides or birds eating contaminated insects or worms.” ⁽⁵⁾

So, what can we do? We’re all responsible for what

Continued on next page

Pollinators...from previous page

we do to our lawns and our shorelines. Make sure that you have a buffer along the shoreline to catch or slow any runoff. Also, if you want more birds, you need more native insects; if you want more native insects, you need more native plants; and if you want more native plants, you need to get rid of – or shrink – your lawn.

My own lawn is covered with clover which some people call weeds, and this white clover is covered with blossoms and bees. I have planted many pollinator beds with both native and annual blooming flowers as seen in the photographs. I use no pesticides, and my yard is abundant with bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

(1,2,3,4,5 citations from McKay Jenkins from the book Contamination)



Above: Site preparation in progress.



Above: The yard before the project began.

New VLA Dock Signs show member support for our mission.... to protect and improve



These striking aluminum signs with UV protection can be ordered on our website at a cost of \$20.

The 12x18 inch sign is designed to attach in either corner of dock front with self-tapping sheet metal screws or stainless hose clamps. Note: many of the dock installers will install the sign at no cost. Please contact your installer for details.

Coordinate a pickup with program leader Steve Lenertz at slenertz@yahoo.com or mobile at 612-594-2040.

There will be payment options on our website at vermilionlakeassociation.org. Please be patient with us in this new endeavor!



VLA Caps

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 <https://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/caps/>

For more info, contact Sheri Sawatzky at 218-780-8178, or sherisawatzky@gmail.com

Thanks for helping us protect and improve
our great lake.

Property Sales or Transfers and your Septic System

St. Louis County Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Ordinance 61 requires that prior to the sale, transfer, contract for deed, or any other conveyance of land upon which a dwelling is located, or a tract of land upon which a structure that is required to have an SSTS, the following must be met:

1. NO INSPECTION REQUIRED, if these Conditions are met:

A valid “Certificate of Compliance for a New-Replacement System” is on file and has been issued within the last 10 years.

A valid “Certificate of Compliance Existing System” is on file and has been issued within the last three years.

A valid “Notice of Non-Conforming” is on file and has been issued within the last three years.

A full list of exemptions can be found in the St. Louis County SSTS Ordinance 61.

2. INSPECTION REQUIRED, if conditions in #1 are not met:

A septic compliance inspection and report can be obtained from a licensed SSTS Inspector. If the “Septic Compliance Report” indicates a passing septic system, then the property sale or transfer may proceed as normal so long as the county has a copy of that

passing report and that the Certificate of Compliance – Existing or Notice of Conforming is issued.

Compliant: A “Certificate of Compliance Existing System” is issued and is valid for three years. No other actions on your part are necessary and you may proceed with the closing.

Notice of Nonconforming: A “Notice of Nonconforming” is issued and is valid for three years. Nonconforming systems are not required to be upgraded and can be used as is until it fails, or until the owner applies for a bedroom addition or other substantial increase in water use. No other actions on your part are necessary and you may proceed with the closing.

Non-Compliant: If an inspection of the existing system identifies the system as Non-Compliant, a “Notice of Non-Compliance” is issued. The system must be replaced within 12 months for shoreland property and 24 months for non-shoreland property.

For further information regarding property transfers, contact the Onsite Wastewater Division with any questions or concerns.

❖ Onsite Wastewater – Virginia office: 218-749-0625. Email: oswinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov

❖ Emily Anderson, Environmental Specialist: 218-749-0639. Email: Andersone@stlouiscountymn.gov

Emily Anderson is an Environmental Specialist with the St. Louis County Onsite Wastewater Division. She has been a member of the division since January 2020 and works directly in the Vermilion Lake area. Feel free to contact Emily or the Onsite Wastewater Division with any questions or concerns. Onsite Wastewater – Virginia office: 218-749-0625 or email oswinfo@stlouiscountymn.gov. Emily Anderson, Environmental Specialist: 218-749-0639, or email Andersone@stlouiscountymn.gov



2022 Photo Contest: Lake Vermilion Seasons

The Vermilion Lake Association invites members to participate in sharing the beauty of Lake Vermilion by submitting your photos for the “Lake Vermilion Seasons” Photo Contest! We are looking for photos of people or wildlife enjoying the lake not only in the summer, but also winter, spring, and fall. (Hint: set your iPhone to “HDR.”)

Email (as an attachment) your high-resolution photos to Lori Ptak by July 31 at lori@ptak.org.

Please include your full name, approximate area on the lake, and phone number along with your submission and a title or description if relevant. By entering, you represent that your entry is your own original work and that you own or have the rights to the submitted photo. By entering, you

also grant permission to the Vermilion Lake Association to republish your submission, along with your name in any and all media without further permission, notice or compensation including print publications, online and social media.

Photos will be printed and displayed at the Annual Meeting on August 6. Attending VLA Members will vote for their favorite in each category (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). Winners will be notified and prizes awarded in each category. Prizes include a MinnBox gift box, lake-themed wall hanging, and/or cash.

“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.”
- William Shakespeare

Save the Date • August 6, 2022

Vermilion Lake Association Annual Meeting

Speaker: Keith Reeves, the new DNR Supervisor in Tower, will share his passion for birding

Location to be determined...



Funding
provided by:



How to become a Lake Steward

1. Take the quiz here at Score Your Shore: <https://bit.ly/3jggldz>
2. A VLA volunteer will visit your property and make recommendations if needed.
3. When qualified, receive a Lake Steward sign with the VLA logo.

For more information and if you want to participate, please contact Pat Michaelson at plmichaelson@gmail.com or call 612-306-7702.

Status of the Lake Vermilion Fishery

2022 Angling Prospects

Lake Vermilion persists as a fishery where anglers can experience notable catch and harvest opportunities for multiple species. Results from the annual Minnesota DNR fisheries survey indicated that walleye abundance continued to be above average in 2021. The high walleye numbers are due to strong recruitment from recent year-classes with fish from 11 to 17 inches well represented in the population last fall. These fish should provide ample catch and harvest opportunities in 2022. Also, an abundance of walleyes over 20 inches will continue to provide memorable catch opportunities throughout the lake while also ensuring plenty of spawners for future generations.



Matt Hennen
Large Lake
Specialist DNR

Anglers targeting muskellunge (muskie) will find opportunities for quality fish with trophy potential as a substantial portion of the population are 45 inches or larger and a significant number of muskies over 50 inches are present in the lake. In fact, Vermilion currently holds the Minnesota catch-and-release muskie state record of 57.25 inches. Anglers targeting small-mouth bass should find them throughout the lake. East Vermilion tends to hold fewer fish with a larger average size compared to West Vermilion, which has higher numbers of smaller fish. Largemouth bass can be found in low numbers overall, but certain areas of West Vermilion provide the best catch opportunities. Although low in abundance overall, northern pike provide catch and harvest opportunities with the possibility for a fish over 40 inches. Black crappies and bluegills will continue to provide angling opportunities in areas of preferred habitat throughout the lake. Finally, whitefish and ciscoes (tullibee) offer harvest opportunities that primarily occur during the fall sport gill-netting season.

Anglers are reminded that a special regulation exists for walleyes where all fish from 20 to 26 inches must be immediately released. There is a four walleye possession limit with only one fish over 26 inches allowed. Anglers are also reminded that since 2019,



Young-of-the-year muskies reared locally to be stocked into Lake Vermilion.

northern pike are managed under the Northeast Zone regulations requiring immediate release of all angled fish between 30 and 40 inches with only one fish over 40 inches allowed in a two fish possession limit. Separate regulations exist for dark house spearing which allows spearers to have two pike in possession but only one may be over 26 inches. All other fish species are managed under current statewide fishing regulations.

Fisheries Management

Lake Vermilion is composed of two major basins, East Vermilion (east of Oak Narrows) and West Vermilion (west of Oak Narrows), that are slightly different in terms of habitat and fish communities. The lake is part of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Large Lake Monitoring Program which includes annual fisheries population assessments, fish contaminant and disease inspections, water quality monitoring, zooplankton surveys, aquatic invasive species surveillance, and regularly scheduled creel surveys on the 10 largest lakes in Minnesota. Since 1984, standardized fish population assessments have occurred for Lake Vermilion using a variety of sampling gears to collect various fish spe-

cies at different life stages. Fisheries assessments are standardized so that the same sampling gear is used at the same locations during the same time of year to accurately track population trends over time. Length, weight, age, and other scientific data are collected for fish of management concern.

The current management plan for Lake Vermilion was designed to guide fisheries management for a six-year period from 2017 to 2022. Since 1971, DNR has annually operated a walleye spawn take and hatchery each spring at the Pike River, a major tributary to Lake Vermilion. A small portion of the walleye fry produced annually at the Pike River Hatchery are put back into Lake Vermilion as outlined in the current management plan. The walleye fry put into Lake Vermilion are replaced at a higher rate than would be hatched naturally from the eggs taken during spawn take operations. DNR's walleye spawn take operations did not occur in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in no walleye fry being stocked. However, natural reproduction from that year-class occurred as expected resulting in negligible impacts to the population. Spawn take operations resumed in 2021 and 5.5 million walleye fry were stocked into Lake Vermilion. In the previous 10 years, outside of 2020, between 5 and 13.5 million fry have been stocked annually in Vermilion. Because the walleye population in Lake Vermilion is primarily driven by natural reproduction, reduced walleye fry stocking rates over the last 25 years have not resulted in a decline in abundance, rather abun-



Minnesota DNR Tower Area Fisheries Technician Jeff Mueller retrieves a gill net during the annual fall assessment.

dance has increased due to various factors.

A muskellunge stocking program began in 1987 with the goal of establishing a low density, high quality muskie population in Lake Vermilion. The current management plan calls for a base stocking quota of 3,000 Leech Lake strain fingerlings annually with up to 2,000 surplus fingerlings per two-year period, as available. DNR's muskellunge spawn take operations resumed in 2021 following a suspension due to COVID-19 in 2020. In 2021, the base stocking quota

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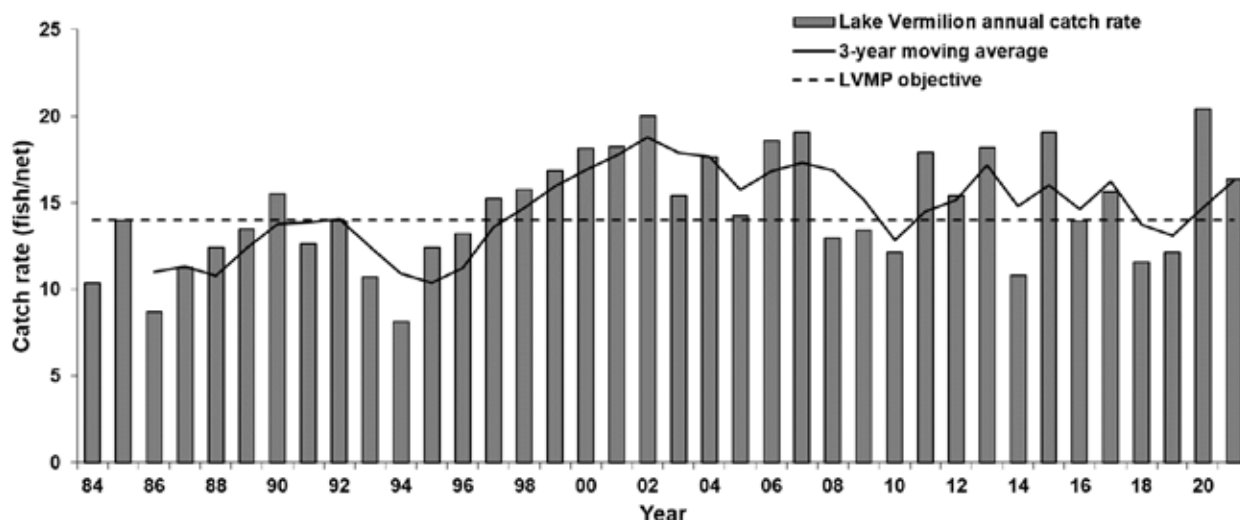


Figure 1. Gill-net catch rate (fish/net) of walleye in Lake Vermilion from 1984-2021. The horizontal dashed line represents the management plan objective. The solid line represents the 3-year moving average.



A 25-inch walleye captured during the fall assessment that had recently consumed a large cisco as prey.

of 3,000 fingerlings was achieved along with 48 surplus fingerlings for a total 3,048 muskie fingerlings stocked. All muskie fingerlings stocked into Lake Vermilion since 2017 have been implanted with passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags to learn more about the population and further evaluate management strategies.

Walleye

In 2021, the DNR's fall gill-net survey produced a walleye catch rate of 16.4 fish/net which was above average for annual surveys since 1984. The 2021 catch rate was slightly down from the historical high (20.4 fish/net) observed in the 2020 survey partially due to harvest and natural mortality, as expected. The above average catch rates throughout the lake in 2021 continue to be driven by recent moderate to strong recruitment particularly from the 2018 year-

class. The 2021 East Vermilion walleye catch rate of 16.8 fish/net was at the historical average for that basin. The 2021 West Vermilion catch rate of 15.8 fish/net ranked as the third highest catch rate historically in that basin following the second highest catch rate of 16.0 fish/net observed in 2020. The consecutive years of high catches in West Vermilion is the result of an exceptionally strong 2018 year-class driving recruitment especially in that basin.

Above average catches of fish from 11 to 17 inches were observed during the 2021 survey. Also, the catch rate of fish from the range anglers prefer to keep, from 13 to 20 inches, was notably high. These fish should provide substantial catch and harvest opportunities in 2022. Additionally, high numbers of fish 20 inches and larger will continue to provide memorable catch opportunities throughout the lake.

Walleyes captured in gill nets in 2021 ranged in age from 0 to 19 years old. Lakewide catch rates of age-0 (2021 year-class), age-2 (2019 year-class), age-3 (2018 year-class), age-5 (2016 year-class), age-6 (2015 year-class), age-7 (2014 year-class), and ages-8 and older fish were at or above historical averages. The catch rate of age-3 fish was the third highest ever observed for an age-3 cohort. This was the third consecutive year of high catch rates of that cohort that has strongly recruited to the fishery. Conversely, catch rates of the age-1 (2020 year-class) and age-4 (2017 year-class) cohorts were low indicating poor recruitment of those year-classes. These fluctuating trends in year-class strength are typical of natural walleye populations.

From 2010 to 2018, Lake Vermilion produced eight moderate to strong walleye year-classes and only one weak year-class which is not typical. The most recent strong year-classes were produced in 2016 and 2018 and those exceptional year-classes are currently driving the fishery. Preliminary estimates indicate that the 2019 year-class will be moderate to strong. The most recent weak year-class occurred in 2017, and preliminary estimates indicate that 2020 could also produce a weak year-class. In East Vermilion, the most recent strong year-class was produced in 2016 and preliminary estimates indicate 2019 is likely to be strong. The last weak year-class was produced

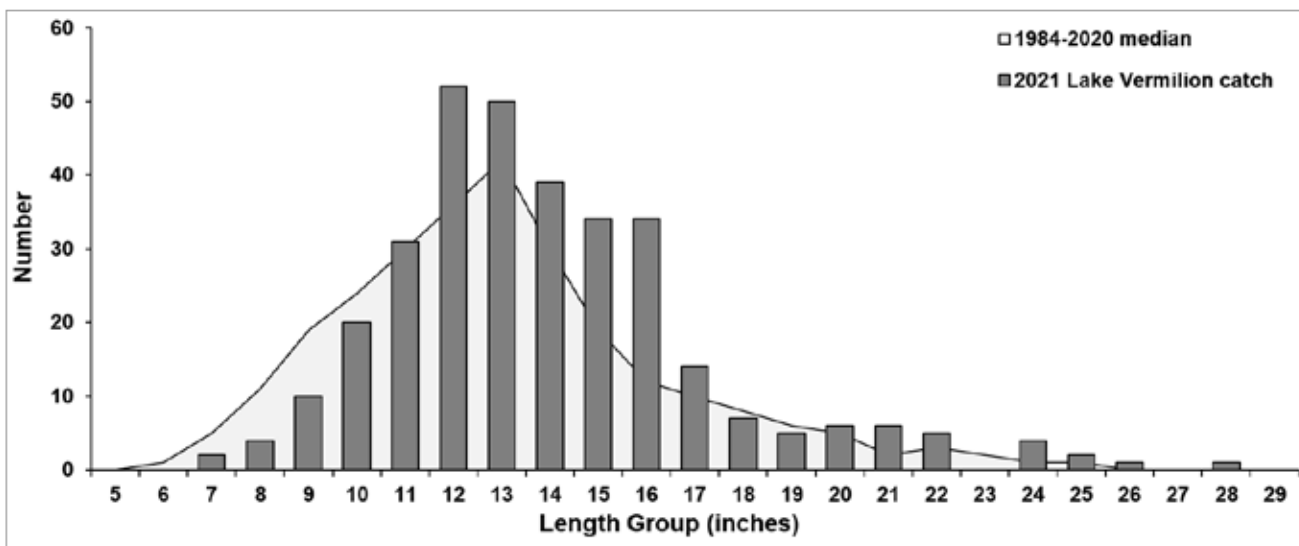


Figure 2. Length frequency distribution of gill-net captured walleye (dark bars) in Lake Vermilion in 2021 in relation to the historic median length frequency distribution from 1984 to 2020 (light gray).

in 2017. In West Vermilion, consistent moderate to strong recruitment occurred annually from 2014 to 2019 following a weak year-class in 2013. The 2018 cohort is the first strong year-class in West Vermilion since 2014 and has produced unprecedented walleye recruitment in that basin.

Fall electrofishing provides useful information on abundance and growth of young-of-the-year (YOY) walleyes near the end of their first growing season. In Lake Vermilion, both the catch rate of YOY walleyes and average length of fish captured help predict future year-class strength. In 2021, the lakewide catch rate of YOY walleyes of 139.3 fish/hour was above average compared to previous surveys dating back to 1988. The 6.0-inch average length of those fish was significantly larger than normal. Based on the catch rates and size of fish captured, the 2021 year-class is likely to be moderate to strong.

Muskellunge

Muskies provide an important catch-and-release sport fishery on Lake Vermilion. The muskie population was established via a stocking program that began in the late 1980s with the goal of providing a low-density, high-quality fishery. During the most recent assessment conducted in 2019, muskies averaged 44.7 inches in length and over 40-percent of fish sampled were 45 inches or larger. Additionally, about 11-percent of the fish sampled were 50 inches or larger. Options for obtaining adult population es-

timates and evaluating recent stocking strategies are being considered for the future.

Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass are found throughout Lake Vermilion and the population provides an important fishery. Overall, the smallmouth bass population in Lake Vermilion has displayed a stable to increasing trend in abundance based on electrofishing, gill net, seine, and creel data over the last three decades. Abundance and size structure are vastly different when comparing the two basins, as West Vermilion tends to have higher numbers of fish that are much smaller on average when compared to East Vermilion. During the management planning process, it was decided that bass assessment frequency could be reduced to once every three years and still adequately monitor the population. Targeted sampling was not conducted in 2021.

Largemouth Bass

Largemouth bass are a minor component of the Lake Vermilion fishery that are primarily found in West Vermilion. The population provides angling opportunities and typically has a low harvest rate. Largemouth bass are not abundant and are limited to specific areas of preferred habitat in the lake. However,

Continued on next page

Fishery...from page 13

DNR electrofishing, gill net, and creel data suggests a stable or increasing population primarily in West Vermilion. Targeted sampling was not conducted in 2021.

Northern Pike

Northern pike are generally found in relatively low numbers in Lake Vermilion but are an important gamefish for some anglers and dark house spearers. Historical fisheries assessment data indicates that abundance is higher in West Vermilion. In 2021, 10 northern pike (0.5 fish/net) ranging in length from 21.0 to 35.1 inches were captured in gill nets. The low catch rate observed in 2021 continues a declining trend in northern pike abundance that has been observed lakewide over the past three decades. Simultaneously, the size structure has shifted towards larger fish which can partially be attributed to protected slot limit regulations that have been in place since 2003.

Yellow Perch

Yellow perch are a primary forage species in Lake Vermilion that also provide some incidental angler harvest. The 2021 lakewide gill-net catch rate of 31.5 fish/net was similar to the catch rate in 2020 (34.9 fish/net) and above average for the lake. However, there continues to be a notable difference in catch rates when comparing the basins.

The 2021 East Vermilion catch rate of 15.3 fish/net was nearly identical to 2020 (15.6 fish/net) and fell well below average for that basin. This marks the sixth time in the last 7 years and the 12th time in the last 15 years that the catch rate has been below historical averages. Overall, East Vermilion yellow perch gill-net catch rates have displayed a decreasing trend since the early 1990s which is likely due to a combination of several factors. Analyses of state-wide trends in Minnesota indicate that yellow perch gill-net catch rates have declined over the last several decades which can partially be attributed to decreasing size structure reducing their likelihood to be captured in standard gill nets. Therefore, the declining catch rate trend observed in East Vermilion may

not be attributable to reduced abundance alone. On a positive note, an above average number of age-1 fish from the 2020 year-class were captured in East Vermilion during the 2021 survey suggesting recent moderate to strong recruitment and fast growth in that basin.

In contrast, the 2021 West Vermilion yellow perch catch rate of 55.8 fish/net was the fourth highest ever observed in that basin and continues a trend of three consecutive years of catch rates greatly exceeding historical averages. It was also the seventh time in the previous 10 years that catch rates were above the basin average. West Vermilion yellow perch catch rates have displayed an increasing trend overall while continuing to fluctuate cyclically as typical of perch populations. When viewing the lake as a whole, the population appears to be in satisfactory condition.

Above average numbers of yellow perch in the 6 to 10-inch length groups were captured during the 2021 survey. The catch rate of fish 9 inches and larger, which are typically the size anglers prefer to harvest, was below the historical average for the 13th time in the last 14 years. The declining trend in the gill-net catch rate of fish 9 inches and larger combined with an increasing trend in the annual percentage of the yellow perch catch that is less than 9 inches provides evidence that the size structure has shifted.

Bluegill and Black Crappie

Bluegills provide significant catch and harvest opportunities in Lake Vermilion, while black crappies are generally a minor component of the fishery that can on occasion produce very good fishing. Trap-net catches and creel data indicate greater abundance of both species in West Vermilion compared to East Vermilion. Summer trap-netting targeting panfish did not occur in 2021. Alternative sampling methods are being evaluated to provide useful data on relative abundance and size structure of panfish populations.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Aquatic invasive species are nonnative animals and plants that do not naturally occur in Minnesota wa-

ters and cause varying levels of ecological and economic harm. Lake users should follow Minnesota's aquatic invasive species laws to prevent introduction and minimize the spread of invasive species. Several invasive species are present at varying levels in Lake Vermilion including Chinese mystery snails, curly-leaf pondweed, *Heterosporis sutherlandae*, purple loosestrife, rusty crayfish, and spiny waterflea.

Rusty crayfish, native to the Ohio River basin, are invasive crustaceans that were first captured in fisheries survey gear and identified in Lake Vermilion in 1986. The population increased rapidly, and they were abundant in a significant portion of East Vermilion by 1993 when they were first enumerated in the gill-net catch. They have significantly reduced aquatic plant beds in certain areas and have displaced native crayfish. Rusty crayfish continue to be more abundant in East Vermilion, but the population has continued to expand in West Vermilion.

Overall, catches of rusty crayfish in the annual gill-net survey display a relatively stable trend since the early 1990s with substantial annual fluctuations. They tend to be found predominately in East Vermilion with the highest numbers typically occurring in Big Bay. In 2021, the rusty crayfish gill-net catch was the lowest observed since monitoring began in 1993, although it was not significantly different from other low catches previously recorded. The 2021 catch is likely just an anomaly and not an indication of population declines. Native crayfish have displayed a steady decline in abundance based on gill-net catches and 2021 was the second consecutive year that native crayfish were not captured during the survey.

Double-crested Cormorants

In 2021, double-crested cormorant nest counts during peak nesting on Potato Island totaled 366 nests. This was the highest nest count since the peak of 434 nests in 2012. However, this was not a dramatic increase from the nest counts that occurred from 2013 to 2019 which averaged about 330 nests with the highest count at 349 nests. No new nesting colonies have been established outside of Potato Island. Cormorant population control was conducted from 2013 to 2015, but control efforts have been suspended since 2016. In the absence of control, no significant change in the number of nests counted

annually has occurred, but cormorant foraging has undoubtedly increased compared to control years. Nonetheless, negative impacts on fisheries populations of management concern, specifically yellow perch and walleyes, appear to be negligible. DNR will not conduct DCCO control on Lake Vermilion in 2022. However, the cormorant colony will continue to be monitored.

Fishing Tournaments

Historically there have been relatively few permitted fishing tournaments on Lake Vermilion when compared to other popular Minnesota lakes. Recently, between four and nine permitted tournaments have occurred each year. The DNR is responsible for regulating fishing tournaments and manages them in a manner that will protect fish populations and minimize conflict with other lake users. DNR permits are required for fishing tournaments that meet certain conditions and permits have been issued for the following tournaments in 2022:

- ❖ May 21: City Auto Glass Walleye Classic (maximum 250 anglers/125 boats)
- ❖ May 22: Minnesota Bass Nation (maximum 70 anglers/70 boats)
- ❖ June 25: Up North Bass (maximum 50 anglers/25 boats)
- ❖ July 7: Champions Tour (maximum 55 anglers/55 boats)*
- ❖ July 14 & 15: Minnesota Bass Federation (maximum 100 anglers/50 boats)
- ❖ July 31: AIM Weekend Series (maximum 200 anglers/100 boats)*
- ❖ August 21: Student Angler Tournament Trail (maximum 200 anglers/115 boats)*
- ❖ September 10 & 11: Minnesota Bass Federation (maximum 100 anglers/50 boats)

*Denotes a catch-photo-immediate release tournament format

Keep Your Catch Fresh

Antique Angler here with some new thoughts about caring for your catch that you plan eat. As a dedicated fisherman for most of my life, I have grown to appreciate the quality of the fish we decide to consume. I learned early that if the fish smells fishy, it is not something that I would consider eating because it will taste fishy after it is cooked. I have trouble buying fish from grocery stores because some of them sit out in open display counters and many times smell fishy and even the frozen fish may have been frozen more than once and some have freezer burn. Even at restaurants you sometimes get a fish meal that tastes fishy, and you know that the fish was not handled appropriately. In Florida, at the fish markets, almost all the fish and shrimp are on ice, and most have not ever been frozen.



The Antique Angler

I have watched several fishing shows where saltwater fishermen/ guides and commercial fishermen immediately kill their catch and then bleed out the fish before putting the fish into a slurry of ice water in a large cooler. The concept is catch quickly, kill immediately, bleed immediately, and keep the fish very cold until cleaned. The more I thought about using this for saltwater species, it does make sense for fresh water too. I have a friend who goes out crappie fishing and keeps his catch in ice cold well water in a five-gallon pail instead of using the live well. Before cleaning them, he would put them into a new pail of very cold well water. The filets, after cleaning, were very firm with improved taste.

For freshwater anglers, many are perfectly happy with the way they deal with their fish and deep frying the fish can reduce taste issues if fish are not handled correctly. Did you know that putting fish in a live well creates stress? I have noticed that there is extra slime, even on walleyes, a possible sign of stress.

So, what is the process to take better care of your fish that you want to eat? First the fish should be dispatched by using a sharp blow to the skull and brain.

To bleed the fish, cut the large blood vessel in the soft tissue immediately behind the gills and let the fish bleed out in the live well. The bleed out is not efficient in the water with ice, so it is important to do it in lake water or the live well. Bleeding produces clean filets with no blood in the meat. We all seem to get some blood on the filet during the filet process and this process would eliminate that.

For people that love to eat fish, following this simple process will provide a healthy and exceptional tasting meal. Please remember to selectively harvest your fish and leave some to fight another day so others can enjoy the same experience.

Deep-fried Coconut Pike

This easy to make recipe is the perfect summertime



lunch. Halibut, perch, and most other fish are good substitutes. The Antique Angler recommends serving this with a common sweet

and sour sauce or a mango salsa.

Ingredients

- 1 cup pancake mix
- 3/4 cup flaked coconut
- 2 pounds of pike filets (cut into 2-inch pieces)
- Canola oil

Directions

Prepare pancake mix according to package directions and stir in the flaked coconut. Dip fish into the batter. When the oil is up to medium temperature, add the battered filets to the oil and cook 3 to 4 minutes on each side until golden brown.

From <https://anglingle.com/fried-coconut-pike/>

A Steward of the Lake Pays it Forward



One of the Vermilion Lake Association's charter members has passed but not before a lifetime of paying it forward. Richard (Dick) Weber and his wife Ione frequented Lake Vermilion for several years visiting their good friends, Carl and Betty Davis, who owned a place on Treasure Island. In 1966, the Webers bought a cabin of their own on Wakemup Bay. In 1968, Dick became a charter member of the Sportsmen's Club of Lake Vermilion, now the Vermilion Lake Association.

Their cabin began as a project, and then became a haven. Early years started with chasing out bats when they first arrived after traveling from the Twin Cities and waking up the next day to cut the grass with old scythes. Their place had a "friendship trail" to the Shoquists' place to the south and many neighbors on the point. The neighbors changed, but the friendships and neighborly spirit remained.

Over the years, their six children learned to water-ski, swim, fish, hunt, and cheer "SAUUUNA" when jumping in the lake. Grandpa Dick taught everyone the Titanic Song to make your bobber go down. Taking care of the lake and respecting the nature it fed was an integral part of the lessons. The lake became part of each of them. This legacy is continuing now into the third generation.



Dick served our country in the Korean Conflict receiving the Bronze Medal of Honor. He proudly displayed the American Flag at the lake home. After service, he and Ione moved to Columbia Heights and for forty-four years he worked as a metrologist for Honeywell, Environ, Onan, Medtronic, ultimately retiring from 3M. Their weekends and vacations were always "up-north" at the lake (218>612).

In retirement, the cabin became Dick and Ione's permanent home. They enjoyed over twenty-five full-time years at the lake. Frequent visits from their kids, grandkids and great-grandkids filled their hearts! Fishing on the dock, watching the loons, eagles and osprey, feeding the ducks, playing cards, picking blueberries (subsequently eating pie) and enjoying each other's company filled their days.

Continued on next page

Weber...from page 13

Stewardship of the lake and the property in the spirit of the Vermilion Lake Association was vitally important to Dick. He protected the shoreline and maintained trees essential to maintain the natural beauty of the lake. During his lifetime he planted hundreds of trees, protected them, watered them, and cared for them – trees he knew he would never see full-grown. He maintained the shoreline with natural rocks from the local gravel pit to prevent washout. His gift to future generations was to leave the place as he found it – a natural beauty to enjoy. Dick passed away in February 2022 at the age of 91 after 55 years of “paying it forward” to his beloved Lake Vermilion.



Board of Directors and Officers 2022

Cook

Sheri Sawatzky, Secretary/Membership, 2750 Wakemup Village Rd W, Cook, MN 55723, 218-780-8178, sherisawatzky@gmail.com

Eric Hanson, 2746 Vermilion Dr, Cook, MN 55723, 218-666-5478, eric@pehrsonlodge.com

Dwight Warkentin, Vice-President, PO Box 97, Cook, MN 55723, 651-269-0674, dhwarkentin@hotmail.com

Terry Grosshauser, 7307 Oak Narrows Rd, Cook, MN 55723, 218-666-0580, terrygrosshauser@gmail.com

Jim Graham, 8978 E Wakemup Village Rd., Cook, MN 55823, 218-780-5525, jcgrahamsr@gmail.com

Pat Michaelson, President, 2384 Deerwood Lane, Cook, MN 55723, 612-306-7702, plmichaelson@gmail.com

Tower

Bob Pearson, 5773 Puncher Point Rd, Tower, MN 55790, 218-753-4212, rpearson@duluthlaw.com

Gary Haugen, 1903 Westhaven Dr, Tower, MN 55790, 612-720-2853, ghmedrep@gmail.com

Lori Ptak, 3505 Downers Dr, St. Anthony, MN 55418, 612-247-3751, lori@ptak.org

Jerry Lepper, Treasurer, 3087 Old Hwy. 77, Tower, MN 55790, 218-753-2629, jnclep4@frontiernet.net

Jill Korpela-Bontems, 4437 Big Rock Rd, Tower, MN 55790, 218-753-6324, jandjatbigrock@frontiernet.net

John Yocum, 4102 Hoel Rd, Tower, MN 55790, 407-873-3883, snootman@aol.com

Nancy Watkins, 5981 412th St., Rice, MN 56367, 320-291-2363, 2bitfarm@gmail.com

Craig Beveroth, 9416 Hearthside Dr., Tower, MN 55790, 952-428-9155, cbeveroth@comcast.net

The Grouse Process

Many of us correlate grouse with the Fall, but some of you might have heard a “drumming sound” in the woods this Spring. The grouse mating process starts in late April (hopefully) or early May when the snow melts. Male grouse beat their wings rapidly making the drumming sound...this is the mating call towards a few hens every Spring, and in some cases will scare off other competing males in the area showing their dominance. Hens lay about a 10-14 eggs, which hatch in 3-4 weeks. 60-percent of each year's hatch is lost to predators, weather extremes, disease, accidents, and hunters.

To see and hear this, go to the YouTube.com and search for a video titled Male Ruffed Grouse Drumming.

Quick Grouse Notes & Fun Facts

- ❖ Minnesota is the top producing state for ruffed grouse
- ❖ Grouse bury themselves in mature forests and snow tunnels for the winter to avoid predators
- ❖ Few grouse live to be 3 years old...predation and hunting
- ❖ 250,000-1,000,000 ruffed grouse are harvested in Minnesota annually
- ❖ Grouse are active feeders in mornings and evenings, but are



Steve's son Brayden Amundson left, and nephew Reece Whitney... both 10-years-old. The boys love spending time at “the Shack” grouse hunting, 4-wheeling, and sitting in the deer stand.

usually lazy mid-day

- ❖ Grouse don't travel very far... most live their whole life within a few acres of where they were born

What to look for this fall to reap the Grouse Rewards:

- ❖ Clover, fresh cut wood edges, berries, budding trees
- ❖ Public hunting trails and

public minimum maintenance access roads are great areas to start looking (not sure what lands are public...download the “OnX Hunting App” to your phone...all public/private lands are on there with your current location)

**Steve Amundson Spring Bay Resort
& Guide Service, 218-780-5941**

The Promise of Spring– Waiting for the Loons to Return to Lake Vermilion

By Noel & Chris Sederstrom,
VLA Volunteers

The Minnesota Arrowhead is warming up from its long winter sleep. In late April or early May, the ice will leave all of Lake Vermilion's small bays, and the warming triggers our loons' instinct to head north from their winter homes along the Gulf Coast. Minnesota DNR experts say others will be heading to the North Country from their winter getaways along the Atlantic Coast from the Carolinas to Florida.

The males come first to claim territory and scout out a place for a nest, most to the same bay from last summer.

May will be a busy month for the loon pairs—building a nest, laying eggs, taking turns sitting on them 24/7 until they hatch, then teaching the little ones how to survive on the food native to Lake Vermilion. We know they're vigilant guarding their young chicks from predators, because we were eyewitnesses last year.

We're hoping to watch them again this spring and summer with the Vermilion Lake Association's live



LoonCam perched nearby. This will be the second year of our project. In our first summer, we figured out how to deploy everything and make the technology work for us. This year, we've been exploring new bandwidth possibilities, ways to get closeup video clips, and a smoother way of livestreaming. We are grateful for the continuing support from Access Broadband of Virginia.

Using an Axis surveillance camera, along with waterproofed audio gear and wiring, the trick will be to install and operate our sophisticated gear without spooking the

loons. It takes a team effort to get the camera focus just right, positioning it in such a way that we can watch the loons but not their human neighbors. We will be configuring a livestream on the VLA website and YouTube Channel, and posting video clips on our Facebook page, so we can all enjoy the sights and sounds.

Thanks to everyone on our VLA volunteer team! We hope our loons return, and that we'll be able to witness a new circle of life on the lake.

Give nesting loons space

A distance of 150 feet or more between your boat and a loon nest is recommended. If you see a loon on the nest with its head lowered, this indicates the loon feels threatened. If you see a nesting loon in this position, please back away until it lifts its head and resumes a more relaxed, upright position. This guideline applies not only to motor boats and jet skis but also to human-powered vessels such as canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards.

Nesting Area



Help protect our State bird

- Do not approach loon nests.
- Do not approach loon families.
- Loons are a protected species.

Plant to Protect Lake Vermilion

The North St. Louis SWCD has been awarded another Conservation Corps Crew through a Minnesota Clean Water Funds grant to assist landowners with shoreline buffer plantings in 2022! Last year, the Vermilion Lake Association, North St. Louis SWCD, and Minnesota Lakes & River Ad-

vocates (MLR) worked together to protect Lake Vermilion through the Lake Steward Program by planting on two properties.



Becca Reiss
VLA Member,
SWCD Community
Conservationist

Having a shoreline buffer can reduce erosion, protect the water quality of Lake Vermilion, and provide habitat to native wildlife. The SWCD will be working with the Vermilion Lake Association again this year to identify properties that could use assistance with planting. This program may be perfect for you if you have been wanting to improve your shoreline but don't know where to start. We can help you come up with a plan. It may also be for you if you have been wanting to improve your shoreline, but aren't physically able to do the work. We can provide the labor through the Conservation Corps Crew if you are able to purchase the plants.

If you have not already, take the "Score Your Shore" Quiz at www.mnlakesanddrivers.org see how you're doing as a steward of Lake Vermilion! If you are interested in the planting program, you can also contact Becca with the SWCD at 218-288-6143 or becca@nslswcd.org



Donations

The Vermilion Lake Association has qualified as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization under IRS Section 501(c)(3). Your charitable gifts and membership dues are generally tax deductible for federal income tax purposes. Please consult your tax professional.

To accommodate a wide range of donor interests, the Vermilion Lake Association has three funds to which gifts may be directed. Any size gift is appreciated and acknowledged.

General Fund: Gifts to this fund are

used for a broad range of lake association activities.

Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Prevention Fund: Gifts to this fund are used to prevent new AIS infestations and to manage infestations already present.

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 "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/>

An Honorable Day for Honorable Men and Women

By Phil Bakken, Lake Vermilion Guides League Secretary

The Lake Vermilion Guides League (LVGL) was formed in 2006. Their mission is “To foster the development and promotion of fishing and associated activities by providing the means for education, preservation and conservation of those natural resources that are important to fishing and to the enhancement of fellowship and camaraderie among fishermen and women.” In addition to the Take a Kid Fishing Day (TAKF) the LVGL members decided to host a fishing day for veterans. Although the TAKF will not be held this summer, the eighth TAVF day will occur. As a tribute to our many veterans, the LVGL designed a program that will allow them to enjoy a great day of fishing and camaraderie with their “veteran brothers and sisters.” The program begins with coffee, rolls, juice and water. The Cook VFW Post 1757 will present the colors, Mary Jo Ralston from Virginia Floral will sing a beautiful rendition of the national anthem, and a local pastor will give the invocation. After MC Phil Bakken makes a few announcements and tells a few jokes (Phil is an ol’ NAVY man, so he gets some good-natured digs in), all are released to their assigned fishing host. Accommodations are made each year for those with disabilities. The veterans fish for about four hours with their host, and plenty of fish are caught and cleaned. The veterans are then treated to a walleye shore lunch, and each is given a gift.

Since the inaugural event, over 800 veteran men and women have participated, including some WWII veterans. The event is funded entirely by donations.



Besides the fishing hosts, there are over 80 volunteers who give up their time and energy to ensure the veterans have a memorable day.

One veteran said, “I was on the freedom flight, and this was a much better experience.” Another veteran said, “I didn’t much like to talk about my in-service time with my family because so much of it was not very pleasant, but here I can share some of my stories with others who have gone through the same things.”

The current chairman of the LVGL, Cliff Wagenbach says, “The LVGL is very proud to be a part of and a host for this wonderful event for our veterans.”

This year’s event is scheduled for Thursday, August 25. You may register online at <https://lakevermilionguidesleague.com/>.

Shore Lunch Site Etiquette

A reminder on the intent of the shore lunch sites is to use and not abuse. There is docking for more than one boat and many sites have multiple tables. Feel free to share if necessary and meet new lake lovers. Limit your time at sites to allow more water users to enjoy sites; the intention is to not monopolize



a site for the whole day. Overnight use/camping is prohibited. Houseboats are not allowed to tie up at the provided dock.

Please leave sites better than when you arrived. All sites have a latrine for your use...remember to close the lid and only put human waste and toilet paper in its pit. If you make a fire, be sure to thoroughly douse

Continued on next page

Brushing up

By Aaron Kania and Roxanne Tea

We were fortunate enough to find a home on Lake Vermilion in the summer of 2020 amidst the flurry of other folks who were also looking for a slice of paradise up north. It was family and new jobs that brought us to the area. We both work in natural resource land management and are involved in wildland firefighting. Because of the work we do, one thing we notice when looking at houses is the type and amount of vegetation on the property.

The house we were lucky enough to find had a well-tended forest. This included open spaces near the house and trees that were set well back from the buildings. Included with the disclosures for the house was a Firewise inspection that showed the work that had been done to help protect the home in case of a wildfire.

During our first winter we did some maintenance work that could further improve the odds of success in the event of a fire. This

included clearing out some dead and downed trees and removing small trees along the shoreline. Then we limbed tree branches to about eight feet above the ground. We removed these branches to a burn pile in a safe location away from buildings that we could burn when there was snow on the ground. This allowed us to have a low intensity fire to clear out the leaf litter and brush whips.

By clearing out the underbrush we were better able to see the shoreline when sitting on the porch. It also improved the airflow from the lake to the house during the hotter days of summer. This helps to keep the bugs down because the wind passes through.

We were very selective of the vegetation that was cut. In some places we sat in the living room and selected individual branches to trim that were blocking the view to the lake. The trees themselves screened the view of Vermilion while also maintaining privacy from passing boats.

We were grateful to have complet-



ed this work prior to the summer of 2021 which brought a historic drought and lots of wildfires. Our next steps are to remove trees that blew down in 2018 and reduce the fuel load between our house and our neighbors. With this work complete, we will rest easy during the hot dry summer months and hopefully enjoy many years here on the lake.

MAKE YOUR PROPERTY FIREWISE: VISIT

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/firewise/livingwithfire/index.html>, For burning permit information go to <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/fire/questions.html>.

Shore Lunch Sites....from page 22

coals. Hopefully this summer is wetter than last year. Please notify one of the coordinators listed if not comfortable letting operators know. Hope you have a good summer and use our shore lunch sites. I would like to thank all our shore lunch site volunteers for the excellent job you do to keep these clear of fallen trees and inviting for the many users.

To report issues, call Mike Ptak (East End) at 612-986-7984 or John Zweig (West End) at 218-750-3971. For a map of all shore lunch sites on the lake, go to <https://www.vermilionlakeassociation.org/other-programs/shore-lunch-sites/>.



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 • 218-780-8178

Membership year runs from Jan 1st through Dec 31st

☐ 2022 New Member ☐ 2022 Renewal

Membership level

☐ \$15.00 Individual ☐ \$20.00 Couple
☐ \$25.00 Family ☐ \$50.00 Business or Organization

Member Name _____

Spouse Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (requested) _____

Phone (requested) _____

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.