



PO Box 97
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Newsletter Winter/Spring 2018

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A newsletter to inform the members of ongoing activities within the Isle Royale Boater's Association, promote discussion among its members on various IRBA issues and share members' experiences related to boating, sport fishing, hiking, canoeing, and kayaking.

IRBA Update by Dave Hand

I hope all is well with our membership and everyone had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. In the fall of this past year, I had a group of Michigan Tech Students perform an environmental impact and dock design for the Siskiwit dock and break wall. We visited the site in September and made some measurements of the site and performed a site characterization. As usual the weather did not cooperate but we all had a good time. The students designed a crib dock and H-pile dock and evaluated the pros and cons of both designs. The crib dock had a 50 ft bridge span between the shore and the dock structure to minimize sediment trapping. For the H-pile dock, a 50 ft bridge was not needed because the piles would allow sediment to easily flow under the dock structure. If sediment flow is the NPS's major concern of the dock structure, the H-pile dock may be the best alternative. The total cost for the new Cribbing dock including existing dock removal, file removal, and 50 ft of break wall

removal was estimated to be \$ 294,500 while the total cost of the H-pile dock was \$ 381,000.

Presently, NPS has contracted an engineering firm to perform a dock design. I have sent a copy of the student's report to the NPS so they can share it with the engineering firm.

In my late December meeting with IR Park Superintendent, Phyllis Green, we discussed possible projects with IRBA. I mentioned to Phyllis that they did not contact IRBA on the Wright Island project in which we were going to help with construction of a campsite and outhouse. For some reason she said they were not ready yet with that project but could do it this next year (We will see). Other potential projects she mentioned included: stabilizing the "Skipper Sam" boat on Wright Island, and possible IRBA contributions to construct two new cabins for rent at Windigo. Currently, the NPS plan to move the Windigo store down near the gas dock has been held up do to NPS review and permitting.

In other news, the NPS has a proposal into the regional office to seek funds for improvement of dock facilities on IR. That is good news! On another note, we recently discussed with the park service on increasing the creel limit from 3 to 5 fish for a daily catch. Phyllis said that they would need \$ 30k to the Michigan DNR to perform a creel count to determine the feasibility of raising the limit. She asked if IRBA could cover \$ 10k of the cost. This will have to be discussed at the annual May meeting.

West End Update by Mark Rude

Our monthly meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, however due to a number of circumstances the meeting site was changed. Until further notice, we will be meeting at the Earthwood Cafe, located just East of Sonju-Two Harbors Ford on the road running between 4 lane HWY. 61 and old Hwy 61. If you're coming from Duluth take a right on the first road past the Ford dealership and it is on the left. The Group usually gets together around 6 pm for a bite to eat and then starts the meeting at 7 pm. All are welcome. Topics currently being discussed include: Siskiwit dock project, Wright Island dock and campground project, possible additional cabins for rent at Windigo Harber, changes to the fishing contest, and replacing older privy stools with new higher stools.

Our next fund raiser banquet will be held on Thursday, June 14 at the Clearwater Grill, (same site as last year). Doors open at 5:00 PM, with dinner around 6:30 PM. We will have the usual raffles and silent auction, so any donations will be greatly appreciated. It's always a fun party and a great time to say hello to those folks you may only see once a year. Hope you can make it and bring a friend or two that might be interested in joining the organization.

Back in May 2017, the IRBA Executive Committee voted to approve a gift of \$ 2,500 to the Rock of Ages Lighthouse Preservation Society. David Gerth, Founder and Director of the Society praised IRBA for the donation "I am writing this letter to express my gratitude to the Isle Royale Boaters Association for your 2017 sponsorship support of Rock of Ages Lighthouse Preservation Society. By leveraging \$ 2,500 donation as a match we were able to raise \$ 5,065 in addition to your donation during our end of the year campaign in November and December. Thanks you for playing an important role in preserving the history of the Rock of Ages Lighthouse."

IRBA Receives a Memorial Donation

Back in December 2017, IRBA received a memorial donation from Captain Jackie and Captain Ron Polomski of Manistique MI. The donation was for William Gardner who passed away on December 18, 2017. Bill was a dive operator on Isle Royale. His vessel was the Royale Diver which he bought from the Polomski's in the mid 1990's. Jackie and Ron owned the Royale Diver and Superior Diver for many years. Bill really loved Isle Royale but because of health issues in recent years was limited from visiting the Island. His wife Mary Jo Gardener lives in Hugo, MN. If others would like to offer condolences, her address is PO Box 496, Hugo, MN 55308.

NPS Update by Elizabeth Valencia

Siskiwit Bay dock update: Planning continues and we still intend to move forward with replacement of the dock. We are re-evaluating the cost of the project due to new estimates which are higher than expected. No estimated construction date.

Hat Point dock (Grand Portage) update: We continue to work with Grand Portage tribe on the new dock at Hat Point. They have funding and are working on final design. No estimated construction date.

We held a Ranger IV design contest for students. It's a first step in looking at a potential new ship. At least one entry was received.

Increase in Ranger III rates. The rates haven't changed since 2013. Here are the new rates:

One-Way Low Season Adult Fare: \$55 (up from \$53 in 2017)

One-Way High Season Adult Fare: \$70 (up from \$63 in 2017)

One-Way All Season Child Fare: \$35 (up from \$23 in 2017)

One-Way Canoe/Kayak Fare: \$30 (up from \$22 in 2017)

One-Way Boat (less than 18'01") Fare: \$100 (up from \$90 in 2017)

One-Way Boat (18'01" - 20'00") Fare: \$150 (up from \$140 in 2017)

Keweenaw Waterway Cruise Adult Fare: \$30 (up from \$20 in 2017)

Keweenaw Waterway Cruise Child Fare: \$15 (up from \$5 in 2017)

Ranger III rescue boat compliance project is underway and scheduled to be complete before the 2018 sailing season.

Ranger III mandatory dry-docking will take place in fall of 2018.

Rock Harbor water treatment plant will be replaced in 2018. The existing sand filtration plant will be replaced with a micro-filtration unit, similar to what we currently have at Mott Island and Windigo.

Work continues with the regional office and contractors on a development concept plan for the Windigo area to identify the site for the new concession store, associated trails, new rustic cabins, and interpretive waysides. Construction for the new store may begin in the fall.

The cultural resources and wilderness plans continue. We should have drafts of both plans out for public review in the summer.

No final decision on the wolf plan yet. Release of the final plan is with the Sect. of Interior office.

Voyageur II and Sea Hunter ferry concession contracts are up for renewal and we are working on the prospectus for the new contract.

We are also working on prospectus development for the next 10 year Rock Harbor lodge concession contract. The current contract expires December 2018.

The Rock Harbor lodge will be open an extra week in September 2018, closing on September 15. The Isle Royale Queen IV will add some extra trips to accommodate visitors staying at the Lodge in September.

Visitation was up approximately 13% in 2017.

Through a donation of \$2500 for materials from IRKPA and work by Jeff Siverston, critical decking and crib work was completed on the Sivertson Fish House.

Rock of Ages Lighthouse Preservation Society had 29 volunteers this summer. They focused on restoration of the 4th floor keepers room. Because they were based on Barnum Island, they performed preservation work on the Frances Andrews cabin when weather would not allow travel to ROA.

During the winter or early spring, a storm washed the America lifeboat from the dock. It was gone when we opened in April. Late in the season before leaving the island, we believe it was located underwater in the Rock Harbor channel. Divers will verify as soon as possible in the spring.

We hired Heather Bies in the fall as the Administrative Officer (Isle Royale and Keweenaw) to fill the position of Betsy Rossini, who retired in June 2017.

Jason Killoran was hired as the new maintenance mechanic supervisor. He started in October. Jason is from Ontonagon and was working for the Army National Guard in Ishpeming.

Exterior rehab of the Malone Bay duplex was completed in 2017. We hope to staff the ranger station this summer.

The floor of the Windigo VC was refinished this fall. Exterior staining and maintenance was also completed.

Annual IRBA Isle Royale Trout Fishing Tournament Results - by Dave Hand

The 15th Annual IRBA Trout Fishing Tournament was held at Windigo. The two-day event began sunrise on Friday, July 14, with weigh-in at 5:00 PM and sunrise on Saturday, July 15, with weigh-in at 2:00 PM. Each boat was allowed to enter the three largest fish by weight. Many thanks to fishermen who donated their fish to the IRBA Fish Fry after the awards presentation held at Windigo.

Plaques were given to three boats with the highest total weight. The Dwane "Bear" Falconer largest fish award was also given to the individual with the largest fish by weight taken in the tournament. In addition, the "Wooden Herring Award" travel trophy was also up for

grabs by either the Minnesota or Michigan fishermen for the three largest fish by weight.

This year's event was just as big as previous events with many fishermen entered in the contest. I will say it would be nice to see more Michigan fishermen participate in the event. For a third year in a row, the big winner was the 'Barbara Jean' (Joe Mecklin, Matt Mecklin, & Mike Cardinal). Their three largest fish totaling a **Tournament Record 84.5 lbs.** Congratulations!



The First Place Barbara Jean Crew

The second place spot went to 'Northeaster' (Archie Abrahamson, Brian Chandler, & Jason Syett) with their three largest fish weighing a total of 72 lbs. On a normal fish tournament year this weight would have taken first place. Bummer Guys! But a Great Job and well deserving.



The Second Place Northeaster Crew

The third place spot went to the 'Fish Nautzi' (Kent Hoffman, Will Werner, Ron Bailey, & Bill Bailey) for their three largest fish totaling 51.7 lbs. Nice job Guys!



The 'Fish Nautzi Crew

The Dwane "Bear" Falconer largest fish honors went to Matt Mecklin fishing on the 'Barbara Jean' weighing in at 30 lbs. This fish was about three pounds larger than last year's big fish which was caught by Matt. Matt nice job again!



Matt Mecklin Biggest Fish for 2017

We also added a new category this year and it was the largest salmon category. Brian Chandler of the Northeaster took this prize with a salmon weighing in at around 18 lbs. Nice Job!

The Minnesota fishermen maintained a strangle hold on the coveted Wooden Herring Award with a total weight of 89.7 lbs. This is the largest three fish total weight recorded in tournament history. Congratulations to the Minnesota Fishermen!



The Minnesota Fishermen with the Wooden Herring Award

New DRAFT IRBA Fishing Tournament Rules By Dave Hand

At the July 15, 2017 summer meeting, we discussed the possibility of changing the rules of the fishing tournament to prevent killing the big fish just to enter them into the tournament. The majority of the members felt that a catch and release option would be good for the tournament. We also discussed how the three fish entered into the tournament would be scored either by weight or length. At that time, some of us thought that total length would work. However, some thought that length was not indicative of the size of the fish. I looked into the use of fish measuring boards for the tournament and weight scales. The thought was that the association could purchase several measuring devices (weight or length scale) and each boat could carry one and when a fish is caught take a pic of the fish on the board or scale and record it on the phone. The picture would have both the whole fish and the measurement visible and be entered into the tournament at the "so called weigh in" time. Of course, if one wants to keep the fish they can do that as well.

I contacted my neighbor, Mark Martin, who is a professional walleye fishermen and he provided

some input. He said on the walleye trail they do have a means of taking pics of the fish with a special camera that can be downloaded and from the picture the weight of the fish can be determined. However, these cameras are expensive and I do not think that our friendly tournament need this sophistication. Mark looked into the cost of boards and scales for the association as he could possibly get us a discount on these measuring devices. It turns out that a good board is at most twice as expensive as the Berkley weight scale devices we currently use. We can get the Berkley scales for less than \$20.00. My thought is to just get the digital weight scales. My feeling is to go with the Berkley digital weight scale. If one takes a pic of the fish and the scale weight on their phone, they can enter the pic at weigh in time and download it on my laptop. Also they can take a good pic of the fish and fishermen for the newsletter.

If the majority is ok with the weight scale thing, I will purchase about 25 digital scales (we have about 25 entries in tourney) and bring some to the June fundraiser meeting for sale or we can lend them out for the tourney and they must be returned by the end of the tournament. If the fishermen want to keep all the fish then they can bring them in for weighing. The new rules will be finalized at the annual board of director's meeting in May. So if you have specific comments give them to Mark Rude or Dave Hand.

IRBA Annual Membership Dues

If you're not sure about membership dues, please take a look at the mailing address on this newsletter. Underneath your name there is a line that shows 'Dues paid ☐ '17 ☐ '18 ☐ '19 ☐ Lifetime" your dues for 2018. If there is a check mark in the 17, 18, 19 or lifetime your dues are paid up. If there is not a check mark, you will need to pay your dues for this year. A

donation is always appreciated! There is a membership form attached to the newsletter if you need it. If not, then pass it on to someone you may know that would be interested in joining.

IRBA Scheduled Events

IRBA Meeting Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 7PM, and March 28, 2018 at 7 pm both at the Range Snowmobile Club, South Range, MI.

IRBA Annual Dinner Meeting - Saturday, May 12, 2018, at the Ramada Inn in Hancock, MI. Beverages will be served from 5:00 - 6:00 PM followed by a dinner buffet at 6:00. Cost is

about \$29.00 per person. Please RSVP by sending Dave Hand an email (dwhand@mtu.edu) with the number in your party or by phone at (906) 370 - 7354.

West End Fund Raiser, Thursday, June 14, 2018, 5 PM, at the Clearwater Grill and Event Center, Duluth, MN.

IRBA Fishing Tournament - Friday, July 20, 2018, and Saturday, July 21, 2018, at Rock Harbor, IR. Meeting July 21, 2018, 5 PM, followed by the fish fry.

Isle Royale Boaters Association

Founded June 5, 1996

www.Isleroyale.org

Our mission is to educate, represent, and promote the interest of power and sail boaters, sport fishermen, canoeists, kayakers, backpackers, and all visitors of Isle Royale National Park. Membership is open to all interested people.

Renewal Membership ____ New Membership ____

Dues: (Check one)

____ 1 Year Family Membership ... \$ 35

____ 3 Year Family Membership ... \$ 90

____ Life Family Membership \$ 500

Additional contribution to support the IRBA mission:

\$ 25 ____ \$50 ____ \$100 ____ \$ _____ Other

Name: _____

Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Fax: _____

How do you enjoy Isle Royale?

Power ____ Sail ____ Paddle ____ Hiker ____ Lodge ____

Name of boat: _____

Please print this form and mail it with your payment to:

Isle Royale Boaters Association

PO Box 97

Houghton, MI 49931

Contributions and dues paid to the Isle Royale Boaters Association, a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, are deductible for computing income and estate taxes.