

Isle Royale Boaters Association April 1999 Newsletter

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Executive Committee Report for the Month of March

by Fred Bieti

IRBA fundraising efforts continue to go quite well. "Tracy's Challenge", a challenge to folks from the western end of Lake Superior, made by Tracy Nelson of Duluth's ComputerWorld has been met and we have succeeded in lightening up Tracy's wallet by \$1000. Thanks again, Tracy.

Cal Miller, with a little arm twisting by a special IRBA friend - Cal's lovely wife Carol - helped meet the challenge as did the Black River Harbor Boaters Club with much appreciated \$500 donations. The Black River Harbor group challenged the Saxon Harbor group to match BRHBC but the Saxon River group is yet to be heard from (out raising funds to better the BRHBC challenge I'm sure - -). Many individuals from around the Midwest have also contributed to "Tracy's Challenge". Keep it up!

Woody Peterson came over from the Washburn area and attended a meeting in Houghton and left a generous \$1000 donation with Secretary/Treasurer Dave Jukuri after the meeting. Woody obviously witnessed some of the regular Jukuri vs. Bieti uninformed political debate and felt that alone was worth the price of admission. (Bieti won the debate, in my opinion)

Thanks to the persistent efforts of John Kappler and Dave Jukuri, final written approval for IRBA's 501(c)(3) classification has been received allowing all deductions, past deductions included, to be considered tax deductible.

IRBA membership has increased more than 50% since 1997 with current membership around 600. Certainly the increased public awareness of Isle Royale visitor issues, provided by recent magazine articles has helped this occur. The number of letters of support IRBA has received is astounding. Many of these letters are accompanied by checks for new memberships as well as additional donations. If you have not read some of these articles they can be found in recent issues of Lake Superior Magazine, BOAT/U.S. and Lakeland Boating.

The Isle Royale GMP has been "on hold" for some time subject to review by Government attorneys. The public comment period was extended to April 26 due to the "inadvertent omission" in the GMP booklet of a cover page telling people where to send

their comments. We anxiously await the final Record of Decision. Areas of questioning for depositions are being reviewed.

IRBA President Jim Markham has written to the NPS with an offer to repair the pavilions at the Belle Isle and Daisy Farm campgrounds. The Superintendent had ordered these beautiful and much used pavilions destroyed last fall but the NPS was not able to get that task completed. We are hopeful, but not optimistic, they will accept our offer.

Fred Bieti
Legislative Liaison, IRBA

Annual Dinner Meeting and Elections, May 1

Announcement

The annual dinner meeting with election of officers will be held the evening of May 1st, 1999. This year's dinner and meeting will be held at the MTU Memorial Union in the Keweenaw Commons Room. You will be receive an invitation in a separate mailing, but mark your calendar now and plan on attending.

IRBA Meeting in Washington D.C. with NPS Executives

Article

Thanks to the hard work of Mr. Todd Hall of Utah Rep. James Hansen's office, a meeting was organized on November 17, 1998 between the IRBA members and NPS Officials in Washington D.C. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the concerns the IRBA has with respect to the proposed GMP for Isle Royale. Three members and association attorney met with Mr. Denis Galvin, Deputy Director of the NPS and two Washington NPS park planners. Our Association attorney, Grant Merritt opened the discussion with an overview of the IRBA concerns regarding the final GMP. IRBA CEO, Fred Bieti P.E. challenged the GMP alleged improvement costs for the GMP. Fred showed that the cost estimates stated in the GMP were flawed and without sound engineering studies. IRBA Executive Member, Mr. Edward Glowacki presented a bar chart explaining the loss of docking space, shelters, trails, and the use of generators. Ed also pointed out other major IRBA concerns in the GMP that will limit and maybe curtail future use and access of the island by visitors. Executive Member, Dr. David Hand seriously challenged the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Statement used to develop the GMP. Dave showed that the proposed changes to the island were made without sound scientific and engineering studies. Mr. Galvin and the other NPS officials in the meeting took the matter seriously as the GMP has yet to be signed and is under review by NPS attorneys at park headquarters in Denver, Colorado. It appears that our first round with challenging the GMP was a success as the plan is under further review. However, we still have a big challenge ahead of us and need as much member support as we can get.



Pictured from left to right are Lawyer Grant Merritt and IRBA members Ed Glowacki, Fred Bieti and Dave Hand at the Washington Airport.

Spring Fishing for Monster Lakers in Moskey Basin

by Dave Hand

In early spring, Moskey Basin is teeming with wildlife including schools of herring and smelt, hundreds of waterfowl and bald eagles. For several years, I heard a rumor at the Rock Harbor gas dock that two old Finnish fishermen would always catch big monster lake trout in and around Moskey Basin during May and early June. So for the past two years on Memorial weekend, some of my fishing buddies and I decided to investigate this rumor. In 1997, on a cold sunny Memorial day, Bruce Sabin from Grand Rapids, MI (member) and Mike Soldan from Hancock, MI and I trolled with light tackle and downriggers from the narrows in and around the basin area. At first, it was thought the paper graph was not functioning properly because the chart was black except for the top ten feet of water and we knew that the water depth was about 45 feet. However, we observed that the 4 foot downrigger booms were bouncing due to the massive schools of herring below the boat. It wasn't long before the first release that we discovered that there were also big lakers down there as well. After a 15 minute fight, we boated a 25 pound red fin laker. In eight hours of fishing that day we had 15 releases and boated 11 lakers that were all over 18 pounds with the largest weighing in at 35 pounds. Maybe all those fishing stories we hear at the gas dock are true after all! This past year I fished the same waters at the same time with David Turnquist from Lansing, MI (member) and Bruce Sabin. The big fish were still there thanks to catch and release fishing. The herring fishing using ultra-light tackle was also fun in the evening hours. They ran in size from 12 to 14 inches in length.

If you have a good Isle Royale fishing, hiking or boating story to share with fellow members please send it to us and we will be glad to post it in the newsletter.



Bruce Sabin and a big Moskey Basin laker pose for a picture.

Visual Bits of Isle Royale History

Article

Over the years many IRBA members have captured the beauty of the Island in photographs and are willing to share them with fellow members. So the IRBA decided to show an old photo and see if you can guess where it was taken. The answer will be given in the next newsletter.

Jim Markham's family took the photo shown below, back in 1950's. This may be an easy one. Hint: south shore and the dock has changed since the 50's!



Mystery campsite where many of us have docked and camped.