



PO Box 97  
Houghton, MI 49931  
[www.isleroyale.org](http://www.isleroyale.org)

## Newsletter 2025

- IRBA Update
- NPS Update
- Repairs at Caribou Island Campground
- Passing of IRBA Members
- 2024 Fishing Tourney Results
- Membership Dues & Scheduled Events

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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.*

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### IRBA Update by Dave Hand

Hope all our members are enjoying a nice winter this year with lots of snow or perhaps basking in the southern warm weather.

I have been waiting on the park service for an update for our newsletter but due to a hiring freeze and uncertainty about project funding for this next year, they are unable to provide an update for the newsletter.

This year IRBA plans on putting together a spreadsheet with information regarding the campgrounds, docks, shelters and outhouses used by boaters on Isle Royale. The table will be similar to the one displayed in the Greenstone every year but will provide information on the operating condition of the facilities (i.e. docks, shelters, outhouses, etc.) at each site.

The spreadsheet will help us identify improvements that need to be made at the various campgrounds. Some of the improvements can be performed by IRBA members in cooperation with the park service (i.e. outhouse and shelter repair). One of the

major issues are dock improvements that need to be performed at some of the campgrounds. For some docks this will require funding to be placed in the parks budget. Once we identify the needs, it is hoped that we can work with the park service and our federal representatives to help secure funding through Congress and National Park Service. A shout out to IRBA Tom Nagy for putting the spreadsheet together. If you are interested in helping us identify needs for the campgrounds and docking facilities, please let me know. We hope to complete the spreadsheet by the end of the summer.

The annual spring dinner meeting was held on May 16, 2024 with 47 members in attendance. Some of the highlights included: 1) the board voted to put \$ 100k of IRBA funds into an interest-bearing account (5.1% for one year); 2) members thanked Tom Nagy for donating electrical materials and time for the installation of the electrical outlets at the Johnson pavilion; 3) President Hand has told the board that he would like to retire from the presidency and they should look for a new president; 4) Pro

fisherman, Mark Martin, provided an interesting talk on fishing Isle Royale.

The 20<sup>th</sup> annual fishing tournament and fish fry on Isle Royale was a successful event. While the fishing tournament entries were again low compared to previous years, the fishermen had nice catches of fish and it was a fun event. The fish fry at Windigo was tasty and well attended.

IRBA members rehabbed the Caribou Island campground shelters in early August with a fresh coat of paint and some structural fixes. See article below.

IRBA held a dinner meeting at the Clearwater Event Center in Duluth, MN, on Thursday, September 12, 2024, with about 37 members in attendance. The majority of the meeting was spent on discussing the lack of maintenance on docks used by boaters. Members agreed that more maintenance needs to be done on docks for boaters use. A group of West End members discussed the possibility of bringing back the fundraiser. They agreed to meet the last Thursday of the month starting in January 2025. The meeting was well received and another one will be planned in the fall of 2025 and a notice will be sent to members of the date and place.

#### **Remembering John Ylitalo - by Dave Hand**

John Ylitalo was born on March 24, 1947 and passed away on December 19, 2024 at the age of 77 years old. He resided in Hancock, MI where he ran the family business: Northern Auto Inc., and was a part of the H&Y Marina in Ripley, MI. He was an avid boater and an active life member in IRBA. John enjoyed spending time on Isle Royale at Fishermen's Home with friends. When Mark Rood (held last lifetime family lease at Fishermen's Home) passed away, he spent time maintaining Fishermen's Home infrastructure

until the park service relieved him. In lieu of expressions of sympathy, the family suggests memorial gifts be given to the Hancock Public School Foundation or Isle Royale Boaters Association. A few generous donations were made in memory of John. John will be missed.



John Ylitalo (1947 - 2024)

#### **Remembering Bruce Sabin - by Dave Hand**

Bruce Sabin was born September 25, 1957 and passed away unexpectedly on August 2, 2024 at the age of 66 years old. Bruce resided in the Grand Rapids, MI area. Bruce was an active life member of IRBA since 1998. He attended all IBRA annual island meetings and helped with the planning and execution of the fish fry and tournament. His boat the "Lakertaker" with captain Bruce will be missed. A monetary donation from Bruce's family members was made to IRBA in memory of Bruce.



Bruce Sabin (1957 - 2024)

and shelters at the Duncan Narrows this coming summer.



Jase & Tad Kinnunen Taping the Screens on one of the shelters.

### **IRBA Members Provide Maintenance for the Caribou Island Shelters - by Dave Hand**

On the first week of August, IRBA members performed much needed repairs on the Caribou Island campground. The crew from the "Mistake" (Mark Kinnunen, Jase Kinnunen, Tad Kinnunen, Wesley Erickson), the "Dr. Trout" (Dave Hand, Al Rahoi), and the Lakertaker (Dave Turnquist, Tom Kukulski, Mark Martin) spent three to four days cleaning the outside of the shelters and followed up with a fresh coat of paint.

There are a number of shelters that IRBA members use on a regular basis that may require some repair. You can volunteer to perform the repairs if you have the time by contacting IRNP to make the necessary repairs and IRBA can supply the paint or other materials needed. This crew hopes to do some repairs for the outhouse



Mark Kinnunen, Tom Kukulski, Wesley Erickson, Dave Hand taking a break.



Shelter with a nice fresh coat of paint.

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

The 21<sup>th</sup> Annual IRBA Trout Fishing Tournament was held at Windigo. The two-day event began sunrise on Friday, July 19, with weigh-in at 5:00 PM and sunrise on Saturday, July 20, with weigh-in at 3:00 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 given to the individual with the largest fish by weight taken in the tournament. A plaque was also given for the largest salmon. 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 had only eleven entries which is one of the second lowest turnouts we have had since the start of the tourney. Would be nice if the participation would increase next year. This year the big winner was the "Reel Chaos" (Tom Nagy, Brandon Cooper, Jake Pericolosi). Their

three largest fish weighed in at a total of 88.1 lbs. Congratulations fishermen!



First Place - REEL Chaos (Tom Nagy, Brandon Cooper, Jake Pericolosi)

The second-place spot went to the "Little Raskel" (Thomas Rask, Tammy Walkama, John Walkema). Their three largest fish weighed in at a total of 62.12 lbs. I think this is their first time fishing this tournament. Congratulations!



Second Place - Little Raskel (Thomas Rask, Tammy Walkama, John Walkama).

The third place spot went to "Barbara Jean" (Noah Mecklin, Matt Mecklin, Joe Mecklin). Their three largest fish weighed in at a total of 60.22 lbs. Nice Job!



Third Place - Barbara Jean (Noah Mecklin, Matt Mecklin, Joe Mecklin)

The Dwane "Bear" Falconer largest fish honors went to Tammy Walkama fishing on the 'Little Raskel' weighing in at 37.28 lbs. Great Catch Tammy!



Dwane "Bear" Falconer Award - Tammy Walkama



Biggest Fish - Tammy Walkama

There were no salmon entered in this year's event. HUH! Where did all the salmon go?

The Michigan fishermen took the Wooden Herring Award with a total weight of 88.10 lbs. This was a close one as the Minnesota fishermen had a total weight of 87.47 lbs. Congratulations to the Michigan Fishermen!



The Michigan Fishermen with the Wooden Herring Award

### 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  '25  '26  '27  Lifetime" your dues. If there is a check mark in the 25, 26, 27 or lifetime your dues are paid up. If there is not a check mark in 25, 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 Annual Dinner Meeting - Thursday, May 15, 2025, at the Bonfire at the Continental Fire Co. in Houghton, MI. There will be a cash bar from 5:00 to 6:00 pm with cheese and cracker platter. Dinner will be at 6:00 pm and the menu will be marinated roast beef and mushroom gravy, shrimp, mashed potatoes, wild rice, green beans with almonds, and salad. The meeting will begin following dinner. Please RSVP by sending Dave Hand an email ([dwhand@mtu.edu](mailto:dwhand@mtu.edu)) with the number in your party or by text at (906) 370 - 7354.

IRBA Fishing Tournament - Friday, July 18, 2025, and Saturday, July 19, 2025, at Rock Harbor, IR. Meeting July 19, 2025, 4 PM with presentation of the fishing awards, followed by the fish fry.

IRBA West End Dinner Meeting - To be determined.

# Isle Royale Boaters Association

Founded June 5, 1996

[www.Isleroyale.org](http://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: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

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.**