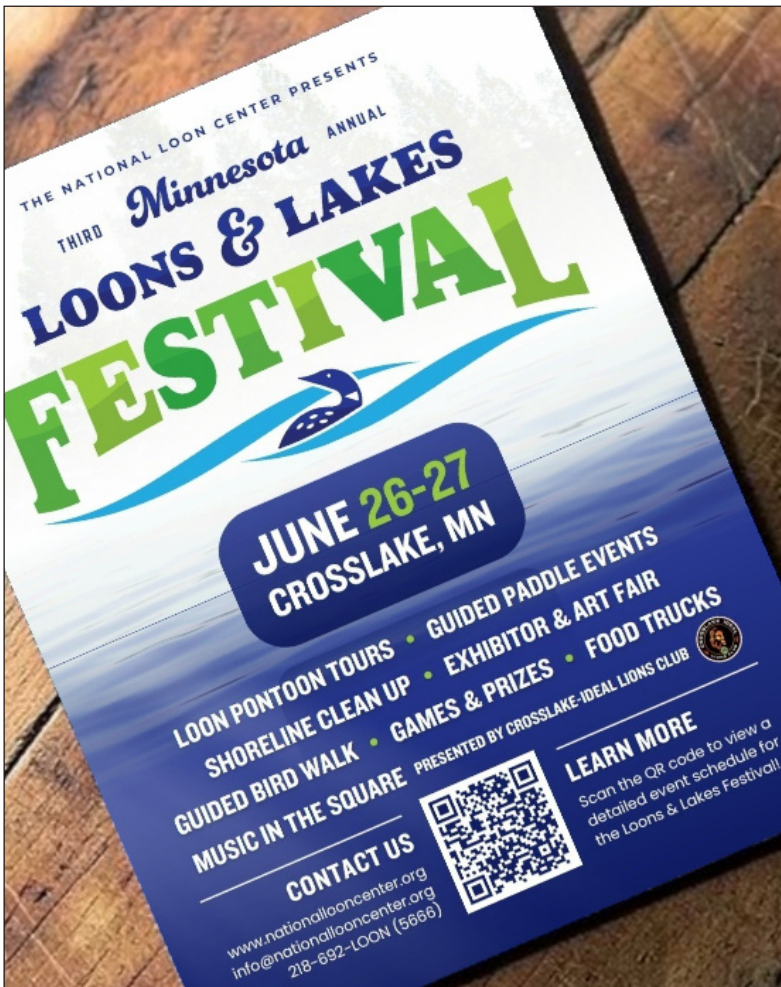




RALALA

THE LAKE ASSOCIATION OF LAWRENCE, LEAVITT,
ROOSEVELT AND SMOKEY HOLLOW LAKES

SPRING 2026



National Loon Center Features RALALA for Loon Day 2026

By Sheila Langer

The National Loon Center is featuring the Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association (RALALA) at its third annual Lakes and Loons Festival on June 26-27 in Crosslake.

This recognition highlights the strong stewardship and community commitment RALALA members bring to protecting our lakes and supporting a healthy loon population.

As the featured lake association, RALALA will host a booth in Town Square on Loon Day, Sunday, June 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., where attendees can learn more about the work the organization is doing to support loon populations and healthy lakes.

RALALA volunteers will be on hand at the booth to answer questions about loon and lake conservation. Attendees may also enter a raffle to win a Larry the Loon water inflatable.

The National Loon Center's weekend event celebrates Minnesota's treasured loons and lakes. It offers a fantastic lineup of events and activities throughout the festival, including loon paddles, a lake shore cleanup, loon games, demonstrations, speakers and live music.



Leavitt Lake Ice Fishing Contest

Leavitt Lake hosted its second annual Ice Fishing Contest on February 28. Organized by Jeff and Karen Caza, along with Barb and Larry Zdnek, the day-long event brought the community together for a bonfire, food, beverages and a variety of prizes for both kids and adults. Young participants were especially excited to receive their own tackle boxes to take home.

VISIT OUR RALALA WEBSITE ralalalakes.org TO BE MORE INFORMED

President's Message

By **Bob Eddy**, *RALALA President*

I hope this message finds you and your loved ones safe and well.

Our lakes are one of the greatest treasures of our community. Clean water, healthy shorelines and thriving wildlife depend on the care and attention of those who enjoy them. As we look ahead to the coming season, RALALA is expanding our volunteer efforts and inviting members to step into two important board leadership roles that will guide these volunteer efforts to protect our lakes.



These are part-time, flexible leadership roles, each coordinating a small group of volunteers who want to help protect and preserve the lakes we all value.

1. Protect our Lakeshore - Team Leader

Healthy shorelines are critical to water quality, fish habitat and erosion control. The Lakeshore Protection Leader will guide a small team of volunteers supporting initiatives that encourage responsible shoreline stewardship.

Leader responsibilities may include:

- Coordinating volunteers focused on shoreline stewardship
- Sharing shoreline protection best practices with members
- Encouraging lake-friendly landscaping and erosion prevention efforts
- Organizing occasional shoreline surveys or educational outreach
- Helping coordinate informational materials and seasonal reminders.

2. Zebra Mussel Management - Team Leader

Aquatic invasive species (AIS)—particularly zebra mussels—remain one of the most significant threats to lake ecosystems. The Zebra Mussel Team Leader will organize and guide volunteers focused on monitoring, education and prevention efforts.

Leader responsibilities may include:

- Coordinating volunteers assisting with zebra mussel monitoring and reporting
- Supporting AIS prevention efforts at public access points
- Organizing educational outreach to lake users
- Serving as a liaison with state and local AIS partners when needed.

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering with the Lake Association is a meaningful way to:

- Protect the long-term health of our lakes
- Support the property values and recreation we all enjoy
- Work with neighbors who share a commitment to stewardship
- Contribute your time in a flexible, manageable way.

Interested in Helping?

If you would like to learn more or volunteer for one of these leadership roles—or serve on one of the teams—please contact ralala.lakes@gmail.com and include your name, email and phone number.



Together, we can ensure our lakes remain healthy, beautiful and enjoyable for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of our lake community.

How to Help Area Loons

If you see a loon in distress, call the Minnesota Loon Rescue Network at 612-226-6571. You can also visit www.acclakes.org/minnesota-loon-rescue.

To report loon harassment, call the Minnesota DNR Tip Line at 800-652-9093.

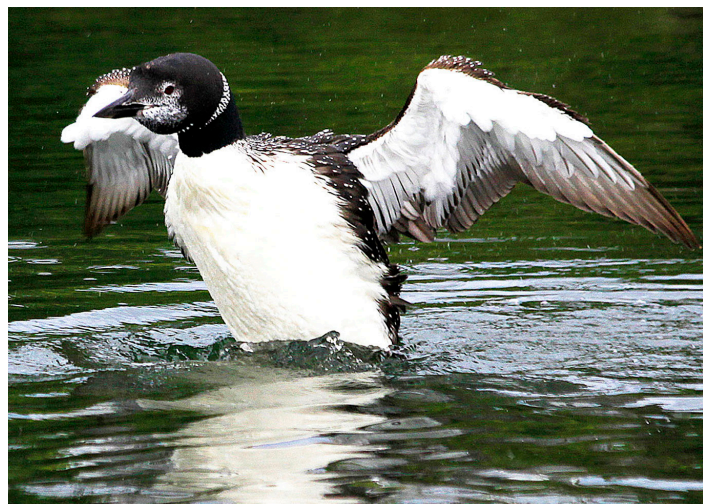


Photo by Sheila Langer

Up North Doesn't Mean Safe

Letting Dogs Roam in the Country can Lead to Heartbreak

By *Betsy Skagen, RALALA Communications Director*

Every summer the same posts begin appearing on Emily and Outing social media pages: “Missing dog. Last seen near the lake....”

What often begins as a relaxing weekend at the cabin can quickly turn into a frantic search through woods, roads and shorelines.

It's easy to understand the impulse. In the Twin Cities, dogs are kept on leashes and behind fences. At the cabin, it feels like freedom. The woods stretch for miles. Many people assume it is natural to let dogs roam freely in the country. But that assumption can lead to a lost pet, or worse.

Dr. Kyle Anderson of Crosslake Veterinary Hospital says that assumption can quickly turn into a crisis. “Our veterinary clinic receives several phone calls every year for lost pets,” Anderson said. “According to a study published in 2012 from an ASPCA national survey, only 74 percent of lost cats and 93 percent of lost dogs are recovered by their owners.”

“We also commonly see pets for injuries that occur off leash. The most common injuries being lacerations and porcupine quills,” he added.

The Reality of Rural Risks

The areas surrounding Lawrence, Leavitt, Roosevelt and Smokey Hollow lakes — as well as other areas in north central Minnesota — present dangers many urban pet owners simply don't think about:

- Wildlife encounters, including coyotes, wolves, bears, porcupines and less dangerous, but unpleasant, skunks
- Large wooded areas where a dog can wander for miles
- Low branches that can entangle collars
- Hunting traps and hunting activity during fall seasons
- Lakes and wetlands where dogs can become disoriented or stuck
- Logging roads and highways where drivers may not expect loose animals
- Encounters with other dogs who are protecting their own yards.

Once a dog begins exploring the woods, instinct takes over. “Dogs can travel several miles away from their original location in a relatively short period of time if they are motivated by chasing strong scents, fear, anxiety or stress,” Anderson said.

Fireworks Can Trigger Panic

Fireworks celebrations are another surprisingly common reason dogs go missing in the area.

The Fourth of July brings fireworks displays to Outing and other areas. In addition, both residents and visitors often set



off fireworks on other summer nights. While they're fun for people, the loud noise can be terrifying for dogs and other animals.

A frightened dog can bolt suddenly, even if it normally stays close to its owner. In the past, area residents have launched search parties for frightened dogs following the Outing fireworks. If you bring your dog to the Outing Fireworks, keep it securely leashed or leave your dog safely inside your cabin.

A Simple Way to Protect Your Dog

The good news is that preventing a lost dog is usually straightforward. When you or your guests come to the area:

- Keep dogs on a leash or within a physical or electronic fence
- If you want them to be able to explore, use a long lead.
- Make sure they wear visible ID tags and are microchipped
- Supervise them closely around wildlife and water
- Use extra caution around fireworks and large gatherings.

Taking these simple precautions helps ensure that your time up north ends the way it should — with everyone going home together.

What to Do if Your Dog Goes Missing:

- **Begin searching immediately**
Many lost dogs stay within a mile of where they disappear in the first few hours.
- **Don't chase**
A frightened dog may run. Instead, crouch, call calmly and avoid sudden movements. Carry treats to help entice the dog to come to you.
- **Leave familiar scents outside**
Place your dog's bed, blanket or your clothing near where they were last seen.
- **Alert the local community**
Post on the Facebook Outing and Emily pages. There are many who want to help.
- **Contact nearby veterinarians and animal shelters**
- **Make sure your dog has ID**
Microchips and visible ID tags dramatically increase the chances of being reunited.



Pictured from left: Cindy Thompson, Lynn Remington and Terri Julkowski of Outing Quick Response accept a donation from RALALA Treasurer Diana Lee.

RALALA Members Go Above and Beyond to Contribute to Community

By Diana Lee, RALALA Treasurer

Maybe it's not the norm for people to tack on extra when paying their bills, but RALALA members are exceptional.

When paying their 2025 dues, members opted to give generously to help first responders and to contribute to area fireworks. First Responder donations are allocated between Emily and Outing based on the property address of the donor. The "pass-through" donations from RALALA members in 2025 amounted to:

- * \$1,640 for Emily First Responders (City of Emily)
- * \$4,685 for Outing Quick Response (Crooked Lake Township)
- * \$3,025 for July 4 and New Year's Eve fireworks (Outing Chamber of Commerce)

Donation recipients thanked RALALA members and said these contributions help meet an ongoing need for equipment, training, medications and supplies.

In 2026, RALALA will also begin collecting funds for the Emily Food Shelf. RALALA board members believe there is a positive impact when lake associations, surrounding communities and local businesses work together to maintain the quality of life we value for ourselves, our visitors and future generations.



Print, Clip & Save: Upcoming Events

MAY

- 12 Emily City Council Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 16 RALALA Hwy 6 Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up, 9 a.m. Meet at Emily public parking lot adjacent to the Ace hardware store. Volunteers needed!
- 17 RALALA Water Quality Testing of Lakes
- 21 RALALA Board Meeting, Noon, Crooked Lake Town Hall
- 23 Emily Spring Fling

JUNE

- 9 Emily City Council Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 13 Pork & Ride
- 14 RALALA Water Quality Testing of Lakes
- 18 Youth Watercraft Operator Training
- 18 RALALA Board Meeting, Noon, Crooked Lake Town Hall
- 27 RALALA Featured at Loon Day 2026

JULY

- 4 Outing Fireworks, Dusk, Luscher's Park
- 12 RALALA Water Quality Testing of Lakes
- 14 Emily City Council Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 18 Emily Day
- 16 RALALA Board Meeting, Noon, Crooked Lake Town Hall

AUGUST

- 8 RALALA Annual Meeting, Crooked Lake Town Hall
- 11 Emily City Council Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 15 Lakers Lions' Corn Feed, Pickled Loon Saloon, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- 16 RALALA Water Quality Testing of Lakes
- 20 RALALA Board Meeting, Noon, Crooked Lake Town Hall

This newsletter was brought to you by the work of RALALA volunteers:
Kim David, Art Director Betsy Skagen, Director of Communications & Marketing



Supporting RALALA

Local organizations help protect Lawrence, Leavitt, Roosevelt and Smokey Hollow lakes

Businesses who help preserve and protect RALALA lakes deserve our attention and gratitude. Please show your appreciation of these area businesses by shopping with them and using their services whenever possible.

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RALALA thanks our members for ongoing support. Many local businesses have increased their support this year by participating in the RALALA Advertising Section. Shop local and preserve our lakes!

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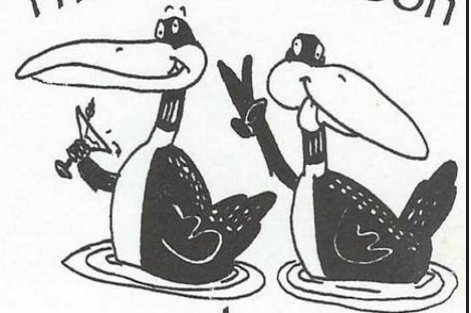
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MONDAY: All you can eat Walleye

TUESDAY: Fajita Night

WEDNESDAY: Pasta Night

THURSDAY: Beef Chimichangas

FRIDAY: All you can eat Crab Legs

SATURDAY: Prime Rib

SUNDAY: Chef Special

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Minnesota Youth Watercraft Operator Training Scheduled for June 18

By Gary Langer,
RALALA Vice President

Area youth are invited to attend a watercraft operator training course offered by the Roosevelt and Lawrence Area Lakes Association, the Lake Washburn Association and the Crow Wing County Sheriff's Department. The training will take place at the Lakeside Cookhouse (formerly known as The Channel) in Outing on June 18 from 9 a.m. to noon. The Lakeside Cookhouse will provide lunch.

Led by Crow Wing County Sheriff's Department personnel, the course is for youth ages 12-17, or those turning 12 this summer. Adults are also welcome to attend. Starting July 1, 2025, Minnesota requires operators born after June 30, 2004, to obtain a Watercraft Operator's Permit to operate motor boats over 25 horsepower. A boater's education class must be passed to get the permit.

The course consists of three hours of classroom instruction, followed by an in-depth test. Upon successful completion of the test, each individual receives hands-on water operation training in boats provided by the Crow Wing Sheriff's Department. The State of Minnesota will issue each participant a Watercraft Operator Certificate.

How to Register

To register, email the following information to dpjohn53@gmail.com

- Name and age of youth attending
- Address
- Name of parent/guardian, phone number and email address
- Grant or decline permission to use photos of your child for publicity purposes.

If you have any questions, please contact Dave Johnson at dpjohn53@gmail.com or 320-894-5903.



A Crow Wing County sheriff's deputy led the 2025 Youth Watercraft Training in Outing.



Take the Quiz and Find Out if You are a Good Neighbor to Your Lake

The land closest to the water has the greatest impact on our lakes, yet many lakeshore homeowners are unaware of how their choices affect water quality, wildlife and our lake heritage. The Lake Steward Program empowers homeowners to evaluate their practices and take incremental steps to protect our waterways for generations to come. Through this neighbor-to-neighbor interactive initiative, we are fostering commitment and pride in the natural beauty of shorelines that absorb runoff, stabilize soil and provide essential habitat for Minnesota's treasured wildlife.

RALALA is continuing its Lake Steward partnership with Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates to promote and support the managing of our lands to improve water quality in our lakes. **It is much easier and more cost effective to prevent degradation of our lakes than to repair them. Please join these efforts!** Start by using this link to take the **Lake Steward Quiz** and find out what you are doing well and how you can improve. <https://mnlakesandrivers.org/lake-steward/>

Learn Outdoor Recreation Skills with the 'I Can!' Program

Registration is open for the Summer and Fall 2026 I Can! Outdoor Recreation Programs in Minnesota state parks and recreation areas.

The I Can! series of outdoor recreation programs helps beginners learn outdoor skills, including camping, fishing, mountain biking and paddling, in a range of beautiful state park settings. For those who have already tried the basics, participants can expand their knowledge by trying a more challenging program, like backpack and canoe camping or sea kayaking.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources offers these programs from the first weekend in June through the end of September. The DNR provides equipment for all programs, giving participants an opportunity to try an activity without investing in gear.

“Our goal is to help people try new outdoor activities and get started in a safe and supportive setting,” said Eric Pelto, special programs supervisor who oversees the I Can! program.

To register for I Can! programs, visit mndnr.gov/reservations or call 866-857-2757 (8 a.m.-8 p.m. daily, except holidays).

Registration fees include a state park vehicle permit for the program dates. Programs include:

I Can Camp!

- One and two-night programs

Learn how to set up a tent, build a safe campfire, cook at a campsite and more. These programs are great for brand-new campers.

Locations: Trips are available at 19 different state parks across Minnesota

- **Backpack camping**

Stepping out into the backcountry for the first time can be daunting. Learn all the basics of a successful trip, including packing and fitting a backpack, hiking to a campsite, secure food storage methods and more.

Locations: Afton and Lake Maria state parks

- **Paddle canoe camping**

Learn about canoe camping adventures, including paddling skills, how to pack gear in a canoe, plan a route and more.

Locations: Glendalough, Savanna Portage and St. Croix state parks

More I Can Camp! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/camp.html.

I Can Paddle!

- Canoeing and kayaking, two-hour program

Learn the basics of canoeing or kayaking on a lake, including launching, paddling efficiently and planning a safe outing.

Locations: 12 state parks across Minnesota



- Sea kayaking, two-hour program

Level up from paddling on a lake or river and try sea kayaking on Lake Superior.

Location: Split Rock Lighthouse State Park

More I Can Paddle! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/paddle.html

I Can Mountain Bike!

Learn the fundamentals of mountain biking to safely hit the trails with confidence, from shifting gears to maneuvering around obstacles.

Location: Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area

More I Can Mountain Bike! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/mountain_bike.html.

I Can Fish!

Experience the thrill of casting a line and reeling in a catch. These hands-on, two-hour sessions cover everything from baiting a hook to safely handling fish.

Locations: Father Hennepin, Fort Snelling, Sibley, and Whitewater state parks

More I Can Fish! information, including program dates and fees, is at mndnr.gov/state_parks/ican/fish.html.





Roosevelt and Lawrence
Area Lakes Association
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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED

Share your RALALA Lakes Experience

Are you interested in submitting articles or original photos to the RALALA newsletter? We want to hear about the area's history, social events, boat parades, wildlife, preservation efforts and more. If you would like to share information or photos, please contact Communications Director Betsy Skagen at bskagen@gmail.com.

Make sure to note RALALA Newsletter in the subject line.

Gather Friends and Family to Get the Area Ready for the Summer Season

Volunteers needed for Adopt-A-Highway

You can help get the Emily-Outing area ready for another beautiful warm weather season. Gather your friends and family and join RALALA in the Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up on May 16. Meet at 9 a.m. in the Emily public parking lot adjacent to the hardware store. If everyone pitches in, it should take only about an hour of time and makes a big difference in the area's beauty.

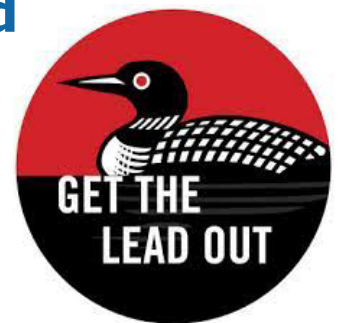
Dress for the weather and bring gloves. RALALA will provide you with everything else including grabbers, safety vests and trash bags.



It is also a great way to meet others from the area.

Get the Lead Out and (Maybe) Win a Prize

By Gary Langer, RALALA Vice President



When sorting through your tackle box, remember to remove lead-based tackle, especially split shot sinkers, which are deadly for loons and water birds.

Bring your lead tackle to the RALALA tent at the Lions' Corn Feed on August 15 for a chance to win prizes. At last year's event, participants set a one-day state record in Minnesota by donating 54 pounds, 6 ounces of lead tackle.