



know if you are paying dues for more than one year, including a donation, would like to offer a no-charge professional service, i.e. legal, accounting, scientific, etc., or to make a suggestion, comment or ask a question. Registration forms are available at the monthly RLIA Membership Meetings and can be downloaded and printed at our website [www.rlia.org](http://www.rlia.org).

**Q: Are my donations tax exempt?**

**A:** Yes. On May 11, 2009 the RLIA was granted 501(c)(3) tax exempt status by the IRS and was designated a non-profit public charity. Among other benefits, the status allows us to receive tax deductible bequests, transfers or donations.

**Q: Is the size of the association of any importance?**

**A:** Yes! A strong membership improves our consideration in obtaining government grants and the size of our membership is important when presenting our concerns to government bodies that are making decisions affecting lake management issues. A strong membership number also helps assure that, through funds received via dues, we will continue to meet all of our operating expenses and be able to take advantage of unique opportunities for members.

**Q: Where does our membership come from?**

**A:** The majority our membership consists of Rush Lake property owners. We also have members from the resorts and campgrounds on the lake and from other individuals, businesses, organizations and friends of the lake who support the purpose of the RLIA. We even have a few members who now reside in other states, but continue to support us. We estimate that about 50% of Rush Lake property owners are members of the RLIA; it is our hope to achieve 100% participation and we encourage all RLIA members to assist in recruiting new members.

**Q: Does the RLIA have a website?**

**A:** Yes! It's [www.rlia.org](http://www.rlia.org). Our website boasts informative and convenient navigation, logical organization of pages and their information, and a number of features RLIA members and all visitors will use and appreciate. The site covers RLIA projects, news & events, and access to many reports and documents of interest to members and lake visitors. Special features include a forum where people can discuss RLIA projects and Rush Lake life, a photography section where residents can upload their own Rush Lake scenic photos, and a secure area where meeting minutes and financial reports can be accessed only by RLIA members in good standing. There is a page that displays all the RLIA contacts and they can be reached via email right at the contact page. Our webmaster is available by email for any assistance you may require.

**Q: How can I become more involved?**

**A:** We encourage all members to attend the monthly membership meetings. We are always looking for volunteers to help with projects and committees related to membership, invasive exotic species control, water quality, fund raising and other events. Consider joining the Board of Directors; nominations are accepted prior to the election, which is held annually at the June meeting. Newly elected officers and board members assume their duties on August 1. The president and vice president and one half the directors are elected for 2-year terms, alternating years. The secretary/treasurer and one half the directors are elected for 2-year terms, alternating years.

**Q: How does the RLIA manage its spending?**

**A:** The RLIA maintains two separate accounts, a General Fund and a Gambling Fund. In order to meet the objectives of the Association, and be fiscally responsible, the RLIA adopted annual spending budgets for the two accounts. Each spring the Finance Committee develops the proposed budgets for the next fiscal year (August 1 – July 31), and presents it to the Board for approval. The Board approved budgets and a ballot are mailed to the membership for approval. The budgets will be adopted if approved by a majority of the membership who return their vote. If a budget proposal is not approved it is revised accordingly and the approval cycle is repeated. The total incomes and spending amounts for both budgets are determined by analyzing the Association's income and expenditure history over the past few years. The budget categories identified in the proposed budgets are chosen to best meet the stated purpose and operating needs of the Association. Members may submit written requests for items to be budgeted; requests must be submitted to the Board by April 30 of each year.

**Q: What are my annual Dues used for?**

**A:** Funds received via membership dues are crucial in both keeping RLIA members informed on issues pertaining to Rush Lake and in supporting the administrative needs of the Association. All monies from dues are received into the General Fund and disbursed for payment of RLIA Operating Expenses. About half is budgeted for Communication & Meetings; postcards, mass mailings, meeting supplies, annual meeting expenses, etc. and the other half is needed to support the RLIA Operation; the monthly stipend for the Secretary-Treasurer, annual Post Office Box rental and non-profit postage permit fee, office and project supplies, document printing, website domain and hosting, etc.

**Q: What are the RLIA charitable gambling profits used for?**

**A:** The Gambling Fund can only spend a small percentage of the profit for discretionary purposes. About 60% of the gross goes toward non-discretionary purposes which we refer to as Operating Expenses, such as; cost of game products, salaries for the Gambling Manager and pulltab sellers, payroll taxes, rent, equipment, travel expenses, supplies, dishonesty bond, worker's comp insurance, etc. About 20% of the gross is for taxes paid on gross profit. Approximately 20% of the gross is available for Lawful Purpose Expenses; the discretionary expenditures that we can designate monies for. Those expenses include our required gambling license and site permits, invasive exotic weed control, lake/channel maintenance projects, agency partnerships for lake quality projects (DNR and other scientific organizations), other projects as forecasted annually, liability insurance, and a small amount to charitable contributions within our community, including Nessel Township for a contribution to town hall maintenance. The Lawful Purpose (discretionary) monies can carry over for an unlimited period of years, which allows us to build funds for projects that we would otherwise not be able to afford.

**Q: What charitable gambling does the RLIA participate in and where?**

**A:** Our charitable gambling consists of pulltabs, bar bingo and meat raffles. Information on games and sites is always printed in the Rush Report newsletter, on the meeting reminder postcard when space allows, and on the RLIA website [www.rlia.org](http://www.rlia.org). Currently you can purchase pulltabs from Rush Lake Resort on East Rush Lake, the Grumpy Minnow on West Rush Lake, Sidelines Bar & Grill in Cambridge, and Rush Hour Bar & Grill at the Bulrush Golf Club. Bingo is typically suspended during the summer months and resumes in the fall, but that can change so please check the postcards, Rush Reports and website for any news on locations, dates and times. When you patronize these establishments please thank them for supporting the RLIA.

**Q: What is the Rush Report?**

**A:** The Rush Report is the Association's newsletter. The newsletter is an important means of communication for keeping members and the community updated on important issues related to Rush Lake. It's also a tool for providing educational information and other interesting news about the lake. Every issue includes Board of Directors Contact Information, a Member Roster, a Calendar of Meeting Dates and a Membership Registration Form (that you can use to renew your membership!). Rush Report distribution has grown to over 1900 copies; a copy of each issue is mailed to every RLIA Member at their permanent address, to our advertisers and agency affiliates (MN DNR contacts, local and state government representatives, Chisago Soil & Water Conservation Dist., etc.) and about 1400 copies are distributed in the Scotsman to the Rush Lake watershed area. The cost of producing the Rush Report is funded by advertising revenue. Please patronize our advertisers whenever possible and let them know you saw their ad in the Rush Report! By supporting these businesses you help fund the newsletter!

**Q: What is the "In Memoriam"?**

**A:** The Rush Lake Improvement Association has established a Memorial benefit for the RLIA Membership and other friends of Rush Lake. For a tax-deductible gift of \$50 or more we will list the memorial on our website [www.rlia.org](http://www.rlia.org), and in the Rush Report for a period of 5 years. New additions to the list will be printed one-time on the meeting reminder postcard. Memorial donations will be used exclusively for water quality improvement purposes designated by the RLIA Board of Directors as those that fulfill the mission of the Association. In Memoriam Donation Forms are available at monthly meetings, on our website, or by contacting the Secretary. Supporting the mission of the RLIA is a thoughtful and meaningful way to honor the memory of a friend or loved one who has passed, especially if Rush Lake was important to them.

**Q: Is there any RLIA information available electronically?**

**A:** Yes! We offer the option of receiving Meeting Reminder Postcards electronically. To receive the postcard by email only, all you need to do is send an email to [secretary@rlia.net](mailto:secretary@rlia.net), type "email only" in the Subject line, and give us the email address you want to receive the postcard at along with your name and your address (so the Secretary can remove your name from the postal mailing database and add your email address to our electronic database). You will then receive the postcards by email only. The Membership Registration Form also has a place to "opt in". At this time we will continue to mail the Rush Report and ballot mailings to all RLIA members

**Q: If I pay my dues in May 2013 am I a member until May 2014?**

**A:** No, annual membership in the RLIA is for the calendar year January 1 through December 31, regardless of when you pay.

**Q: When should I send in my dues and renew my membership?**

**A:** Dues are due in January for the calendar year January 1– December 31. It is important that you return your renewal of membership form and dues payment promptly. It helps us in setting a budget for the year and cuts down on administrative work when dues are paid on time.

**Q: What is the RLIA mailing address?**

**A:** RLIA, PO BOX 677, RUSH CITY, MN 55069-0677