



Past Commodore Mike Lutz and fiancée Amy (right), and Sue Waddle, wife of the new Vice Commodore, Bob Waddle.

Commodore's Comments

Still find the term "Fall Dinner" depressing, but almost everything else about the evening was anything but. (I say almost because the Camp's air conditioner didn't seem to be working at 100%). We had a great turnout - over 100, a delicious dinner prepared by Honkers Catering, and a nice melodic ambience provided by Duane and the Gundyites. Thanks to all that attended and particularly to all that chipped in to help: Bob and Le King, Vickie Rogers, Karen Brovold, Katha Machalleck, Denny Weesner, Judy Olson, Mike Lutz, Chas and Amber Grundy, Pam and Rich Mullin, Lind and Don Harman, Blair Garceau, Patty Russwurm, Fred Freihofer, Sandy and Phil Vitale, Celia Fallon, and all those that aided in returning the camp's dining hall to its more normal condition at the end of the evening. Everyone really seemed to enjoy themselves.

More significant than the food and fellowship though was the opportunity to honor those that have served and to welcome those who have agreed to serve in the future. We are all indebted to Mike Lutz for his selfless service on our behalf as Commodore, to Amy Truedell for being with Mike every step of the way, and to our 3 long serving, retiring board members Judy Olson, Dick Bender, and Blair Garceau. To fill their shoes (it took six), six more lake lovers have agreed to pick up the torch and serve on the board: Bob Baucus, Lind Harman, Sue Williams,

Steve Quinlan, Karen Brovold, and Nancy Walker. I'm most excited, pleased, and even humbled that Bob Waddle has signed up for another tour of duty, agreeing to be our Vice Commodore for 2009. God bless you Bob.

There were a number of announcements made at the dinner that should be shared with all:

- Please make sure you have signed up for the online Barker. The printed one you are now reading is the last one of '08, and we want all to keep up on what's happening until the weekly printed Barker returns next Memorial Day. Depending on the amount of contributions he receives, Phil commonly puts together an online Barker once a month or so in the interim.

- Please do your part by keeping nutrients out of the lake and off of your yard. This includes animal droppings, yard waste, and as we've all heard before, any kind of fertilizer with phosphorous in it. If someone does your lawn for you, don't let them use phosphorous either.

- The highly successful contest to guess correctly on which day the lake freezes over solid is going to be repeated this year and expanded. Chas Grundy, one of last year's winners will chair this year's event. Pay attention to the online Barker for more details.

- To help fight winter boredom, we are instituting another challenge, an essay contest. Submit your entries, 250 words in length, on "Why I Love Birch Lake" or "What I Love Most about Birch Lake" on or before April 15, 2009. There will be prizes for the best three entries, as deter-

2008 BLYC Calendar*

Mon., Sept 1 — End-of-season sailors' meeting at 10 am BLYC
 Sat. Sept 27 — Board Meeting 9 am
 Oct 4 — Annual Chili Cook Off
 TBA — Sailing Awards
 Fish & Wing Dinner
 Card Party

mined by an esteemed panel of judges. So that we may share your thoughts with others, all entries will become the property of the BLYC. Again, there will be more details and reminders in the online Barker.

At our August meeting, the Board decided that our next regular meeting will not be held until Saturday the 27th. A number of us, including your new Commodore, had conflicts on the 6th and at least one of us won't be back in commission until after the weekend of the 20th. I'm sorry for any inconvenience this may cause. Certainly, if a crisis and the need for immediate Board action arises during my absence, the new VC will call a special meeting and conduct whatever business is necessary at that time.

Past Commodore comments have closed with the phrase "See you on the water" or similar. It's hard for me to recognize people, particularly when I'm in the water without my glasses. So, I'll never be sure if I saw you on the water or not. Instead, I'd prefer to say "Together, let us all enjoy and protect the miraculous healing waters of Birch Lake".

-Paul Fallon -Commodore 2009

We are always soliciting and accepting materials for publication. E-mail the info to sailorphil@philvitale.com, or, if you must, put the materials in the red Barker box at 63174 Birch Rd. (East Shore). You can also mail your items to: Phil Vitale, 102 So. Broadway, Cassopolis, MI 49031, or fax to (269) 445-9200. To contact me by phone, call (269) 476-1680 or (269) 445-9200. Please note, if you do not receive a Barker, please call Mike Lutz at 476-2843 or (cell) 269-207-1153.

— Birch Lake Notes —

Whiteman's 25th

Friends of Ron and Staci Whiteman are invited to stop by the Birch Lake Yacht Club on Sunday August 31st between the hours of 2-8pm to help them celebrate their 25th Wedding Anniversary. They will be renewing their vows at 3 pm. The couple was married September 3rd 1983 in Cassopolis Michigan. They will be having a Hawaiian Luau Hawaiian attire requested not required hope to see you there.



Holiday performance

"The Company" presents their performance of "A Merry Como Christmas, Singin' and Dancin into the Holidays." This year the Company will perform a selection of toe tapping tunes memorable hits

from Broadway, Rock and Roll, jazz and a sprinkling of holiday music, as well as a perform a tribute to their Grandfather, Perry Como. The performances to be held at The "newly remodeled" Battell Center Theatre, 904 North Main Street, Mishawaka, on Nov. 7, 8, 14 15, 21 and 22. Curtain time is 8 p.m.

Since the beautiful remodeling, seating at Battell Center Theatre has been reduced, seating for all performances is limited, get your tickets early!! Ticket prices are \$9 for seniors, and \$10 for adults.

We, at "The Company" are sorry about the hike in ticket prices, however, we have fewer seats this year, but on the flip side it will be much more comfortable!

Barker Kid of the Week



Cal King celebrated his 15th birthday this week and is having friends from town up on Saturday to par-tay. Be afraid. Lakers are welcome to stop by and join the mass spanking. B-Y-O-P (bring your own paddle), and ... the line forms at the rear (so to speak).

For reserve tickets or for information about tickets please call 574-258-1667, or go to www.thecompany-players.com

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Birch Barker Kids of the Week



Three year-old twins Aidan and Luke Eichorst of Sun prairie, WI, help Nana (Judie) and Papa (Doug) Eichorst's black-eyed susans grow during a recent visit to Birch Lake.



Don & Lind Harman's grandsons Alex and Drew. on Alex's 1st day at school.

Missing items ... thefts?

Contact the Cass County Sheriff at "911" for to report suspected thefts, suspicious behaviors or non-emergencies at 445-8644. For emergencies, dial 9-1-1.

Birch Lake clothing

Birch Lake clothing & accessories available for purchase! Due to overwhelming requests for items presented at the Ladies Golf outing, we are happy to take orders for

bathrobes (unisex&size) white embroidered for \$55, Sweatshirts & pants \$35 ea; In stock we have PING hats \$20 (black), golf towels \$8, and t-shirts \$15. Call Amy for more details (2843).

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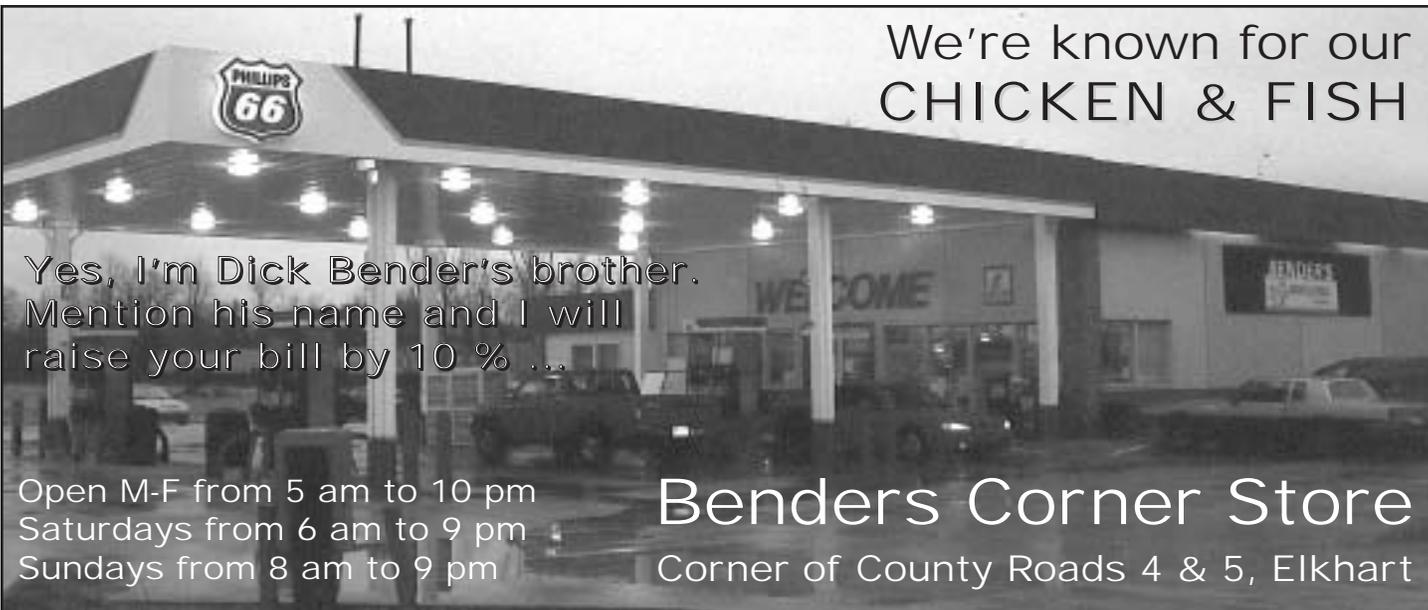
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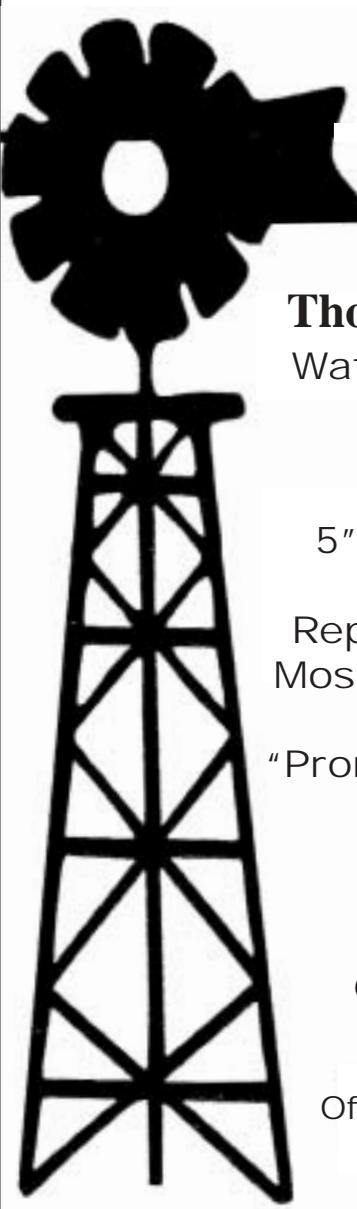
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Fleet Captains' Corner



Labor Day Regatta coming

Labor Day Regatta -- The last big sailing event for the BLYC will be this weekend! Races on Saturday and Sunday at 11:00 a.m. (or Monday as a rain date). Come on out and join the fun!

Last Sunday saw the last three races of the regular racing season. And what a season it has been - we've had great wind for almost every race, and a great turnout (at least from the MCs) for all the races.

OK, so there are a couple of things

about the season that aren't so great — (1) we didn't have nearly enough Sunfish sailors join the fun, and (2) I ended up in last place. On a brighter note, though, this week you may have noticed a new feature of our Sunday morning races: corporate sponsorships! Yes, Madison Avenue came to Birch Lake as we were all treated to commercial interludes at the start of the races. Thanks, Stewart! (Oddly enough, all of the corporate sponsors were on the committee boat, and

the only thing the sponsorship provided, apparently, was beverages for the race committee.) Thanks, by the way, to the race committee (Patty, Mike, Amy, Deb, Stewart, Fry) for their hours of grueling effort.

Sailors, don't forget: we will have a quick meeting 10:00 Monday morning at the Yacht Club to wrap up the season.

-Fleet Captain Bill

Last week's results & totals

Date	24-Aug	24-Aug	24-Aug	Total	Season	Races
Race	24	25	26	Points	Average	Completed to Date (Including Regattas)
MC Scow(Total Season Races to Date = 26)						
Scott Troeger	3	1	5	31896	1519	26
Rick Harman	DNS	DNS	DNS	2965	1483	2
Harold Cranmer	4	7	6	35050	1460	26
Bob King	1	3	3	27559	1450	24
Don Harman	2	2	2	28622	1363	25
Phil Vitale	6	5	4	30734	1336	28
Jeff Smitley	5	6	7	34058	1310	30
Jim Bolinger	DNS	DNS	DNS	14186	1290	16
Dave Olson	8	4	1	26721	1215	25
Bill Luecht	7	8	8	31425	1209	30
Sunfish(Total Season Races to Date = 24)						
Tom Howard	2	1	2	37381	1558	24
Rick Russwurm	1	2	1	23293	1553	19
Erica Vitale	DNS	DNS	DNS	23655	1478	20
Katie Luecht	DNS	DNS	DNS	8838	1473	8
Mike Gotstein	DNS	DNS	DNS	2813	1407	2
Sandy Vitale	DNS	DNS	DNS	21092	1406	18
Eric Odenwald	DNS	DNS	DNS	4182	1394	3
Chris Scofield	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	0	4

DNS (Did Not Sail) does not count against season score, however sailor must complete 2/3 of races to qualify for season.
 DNF (Did Not Finish) scores as one place worse than last place (if 5 boats finished, you would have finished 6th, will be scored as 7th place).
 DNF not counted toward minimum number of races needed.
 DQ (Disqualified) 0 points..
 STT (Stopped to Teach) scored as first place.
 CB - sailor who serves on Committee Boat receives a 1st place finish for that day - counted toward season total.....
 Season Points are awarded on Square of 40 system (1st = 40 squared = 1600, 2nd = 39 squared, etc.).
 Season Place = total season points/number of races attempted.



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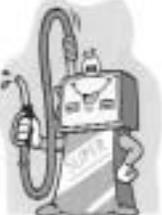
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Thanks to last week's committee boat staff ...

Thanks for a great year!

In the final Fido column of the year, Fido himself would like to thank everyone for reading. Hope you have enjoyed. The biggest thank you to everyone who has invited him into their homes and on their boats for visits this summer. He has enjoyed playing with all of his k-9 lake friends

He would also like to apologize for any poop not properly removed from anyone's yard (obviously a human's error), for kicking leaves and muck on

Ms Vickie after misjudging his stream angle and almost peeing on her, and for the countless times he shook water all over everyone after a swim. And last but certainly not least for stealing Sasha's bone and hiding it from her.

Bad dog!

Have a safe and happy fall.

Yap at cha next year.



-Fido's Friend

LEASH YOUR DOG IT'S THE LAW!

What you'll miss if you leave at Labor Day

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**Answers to
 the What I like
 about Birch
 Lake
 Wordsearch
 from last week**
 for this week's answers,
 see the back page

TOADS
 CANE POLE
 KAYAK
 WADING
 TURTLES
 BOBBER
 WATERMELON
 TUBE
 FLY ROD
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 BOAT
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 HOT DOGS

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 NOODLE
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Tannadoonah Tidbits

Wow, I just can't believe that this is the last Barker of the year. It seems like the summer of 2008 flew by! I hope that everyone enjoyed their summer on Birch Lake as much as I did.

We had a fantastic year at camp, and I can hardly wait for next year to get here. In fact, I'm kind of already counting down. In approximately 41 weeks the staff will be arriving at camp to kick off another summer!

It's not all over yet for this year, though. We have a number of fall events for adults, kids, and families. Next weekend on Friday night (September 5), we will be having a Camp Fire Silent Auction at Buffalo Wild Wings in downtown South Bend (Washington St). All proceeds from the auction will go to Camp Fire. Many of the items in the auction will be Notre Dame Football related, as it is the night before the 2008 season opener.

September 19 - 21 will be our family camping weekend at Tannadoonah. Families can stay in a cabin or pitch a tent. Meals are provided, and we will have staff on hand to run activities like archery, sports and games, nature hikes, and crafts. Join us for a fantastic weekend of family fun!

September 26 - 28 will be our annual Fall Festival weekend for campers. This is a great weekend for new campers to try out the camp experience, or for returning campers to meet up with their summer



friends for one last camp weekend before winter. We'll have all the regular camp activities like archery, nature, drama, crafts, and sports and games. It's also an ND home game weekend, so if you're planning to go to the game, you can get an entire weekend of child care for just \$75!

I've had a lot of inquiries about whether we'll be having another women's retreat weekend, and at this point it doesn't look there is a good weekend to have that in the fall. But I'm going to try to plan one for the spring for sure!

We were really pleased with the turnout for the Adopt-a-Cabin fund. Thank you all so much for your

generous contributions to both the Cabin fund and also the Campership Fund! Here are the totals thus far:

East Shore: \$425 (Luta Koda)

North Shore: \$150

South Shore: \$725 (Rotary)

West Shore: \$1025 (Wallace)

Welch Family: \$500 (Exchange)

I hope that everyone enjoyed the fall dinner at camp. It is so much fun to see everyone at these events, and even more fun for me when we get everyone together up at camp!

Thanks again for a great summer, and I hope to see everyone often through the fall and winter!
-Miss Amber

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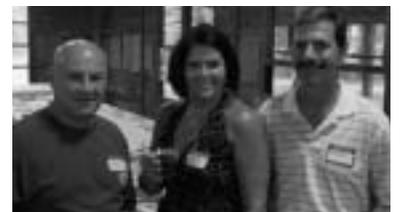
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2008 BLYC Fall Dinner



Tom Rogers (right), of the Cove received this year's Commodore's Trophy. Don Harman (above) was given a special commendation for his "behind the scenes" work at the Yacht Club



Photos by Chas Grundy, Rhonda Eschleman & The PattiCam

Water Quality Committee Report

**Water Quality Program
Water Quality Committee Lake
Management Report
Rick Russwurm Chairman,
Bob & Gert Temple, Terry Dugan**

As has been the case over the past few weeks and will probably be a item of interest in the near future, the Water Quality Committee reports are dealing with the bacterial sampling that has been going on the lake this summer. These have been either the individual spot checks in response to resident requests or as part of the formal sampling program initiated by the Committee in response to some data from the spot checks. For your attention this week, we will discuss some of the most recent events and what we expect to be doing next.

■ 1. Due to some observations of high bacterial counts in certain locations and especially high E coli, there has been a concern that the sewer may in some way be involved. The Township board approved funding for a visual inspection and dye tracking of the sewer system around the lake. With the exception of a broken piece of PVC pipe in one manhole, deemed to be trash inappropriately discarded, there was no indication of sewer problems visually or through movement of dye into the lake.

It was felt that to properly continue exploring a sewer impact, a camera would need to be sent through the sewer pipe to look for cracks or improper joint fittings. A whole sewer look would be in the area of \$30,000. However, since leakage due to water pressure around any part of the sewer below the water table would be into the sewer pipe, the recommendation was to only pass the camera through those areas, with a vastly reduced cost, i.e. around \$7000. A public meeting was held with the township board last Thursday evening which was well attended by the lake community. The purpose was to discuss the information available and to vote on whether to expend the money for the camera work. Since additional sampling (to be discussed below) and potential source tracking of the bacteria may be happening, the township board voted to hold off on an approval until this additional data was available.

Significantly however, the township board did vote to make a formal request to the Cass County Health Department for assistance due the elevated E coli readings.

■ 2. As has been previously mentioned there have been individual random samples for Total coliform and E coli taken at spots on the lake due to requests based on "slicks" etc. that looked suspicious. These data have been reported up through what was available on August 1. **We have received more samples, and these are shown here.**

The data for the second week of the formal lake testing program is included on the table below which shows the first week and the second week data. For the five sampling stations there are no elevated coliform or E coli levels. However, we asked that a sample of the stream be taken and that data was significantly elevated. Due to that we wanted to look further at the stream to see if this was only in the area covered by the sewer. Samples were taken between the road and the lake (same as first one), upstream behind Klappauf's garage, and about 5 yards further upstream along the periphery of the Curtis property. This data is also shown here with similar significant E coli levels at all points along the stream.

Thus it would appear that the stream is at least one point source of input of E coli into the lake, although the lake testing program does not indicate significant levels at a point 30 or so feet away from the stream out in the body of the lake. We are awaiting a proposal from a laboratory at Michigan State University that can evaluate whether the source is human or non human. Upon determining the technical arrangement necessary, we will look to evalu-



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WATER ANALYSIS

Following are the results for the tests which were requested

FOR: GERT TEMPLE

Date	Location	Total Coliform/100 ml	E coli/100ml
8/13/2008	Welch	33	2
8/17/2008	Curtis N	>1100	>1100
	Curtis S	>1100	>1100
	Stream (mouth)	>1100	>1100
The Curtis samples were taken around a slick in the area.			
8/18/2008	Weesner (east)	>1100	23
8/19/2008	County Park	300	300
8/20/2008	Welch	>1100	>1100



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WATER ANALYSIS

Following are the results for the tests which were requested

FOR: BLYC

Date	Location	Time	Coliform	E-Coli
8/18	Special sample	n/a	8	4
8/20	Sample 1	7 am	8	<2
	Sample 2	7 am	4	<2
	Sample 3	7 am	13	2
	Sample 4	7 am	20	<2
	Sample 5	7 am	4	2
	Spring	7 am	900	900

Date: August 21, 2008

Re: Birch Lake Algae Bloom

After examining several drops (4) of the greenish water under the microscope (400X, 1000X) almost all of the green coloration is due to numerous colonies of a blue-green algae, Cyanophyta. The dominant species is Coelosphaerium, with some clusters (<10%) of Microcystis sp.

The accelerated growth of these blue-green results in the existing "water bloom" found in Birch Lake. They are usually brought about by the summer warming of the waters and the increasing eutrophication brought about by domestic, agricultural, and/or industrial pollution.

John C. Banks, PhD
Andrews University

ate at least two sources of elevated E coli in the lake. One will obviously be that from the stream. We will look to get a sample that has high E coli from another location removed from the stream. We have asked some homeowners following our ability to do this specific testing to alert us to very suspicious observations so that we can collect, determine if E coli is there and then do source testing.

What would the above tell us. If human, keep looking at the sewer. If non human, evaluate all possibilities of contamination. It would be hoped that the Cass County Health Department and the DEQ would be intimately involved.

■ 3. Another outcome from the Township was the opportunity to work with a Agricultural and Water Quality specialist that lives on Eagle lake. We will be meeting with this individual (expanded group) shortly. The discussion

items will not be restricted to bacterial pollution. We also have concerns about additional nutrient loading etc. and all the consequences that may entail. Last week we obtained a sample from a dense slick at the Seyfarth place. This was broken down to see what it was. It was blue green algae, which is actually a form of nitrogen fixing bacteria that has chlorophyll and thus can generate energy through photosynthesis. There are always blue green algae in water ways, but they usually do not bloom in the absence of certain conditions. One of these is a elevation in available phosphorous, a primary limiting nutrient.

So lots of work and we will continue communication post this last printed Barker through the Barker website. Phil Vitale will be providing information for all the Birch Lake residents on how to access that until the printed editions start again next May.

What's going on with the lake?

Over the last several weeks a number of us have heard reports of slicks on the lake's surface, lessening of water clarity, and high bacteria counts in the lake. Many have asked me for an explanation of what is, or isn't, going on with our beloved lake. Here are the facts as I believe them to be:

■ 1. Unexplained, unattractive surface slicks started showing up on the east side in July, often in the morning and often after a period of heavy winds and/or boat traffic. Thanks to a resident's call, we (Rick Russwurm and Terry Dugan) were able to get a sample of a slick itself early last week and have it tested. The material proved to be organic, basically a "blue-green algae bloom". I'm told by many old timers that these slicks have been around for years: Harold Cranmer's grandfather spoke to him of them existing as far back as 1875, Ben Wozniak recently read reports of them in old Barkers from 2000 and 2001, Don & Lind Harman remember bringing a sample of slick material to the Board when Randy Welch was Commodore.

■ 2. Being concerned when the slicks first started to appear, Gert and Bob Temple took a number of water samples in the area of some of the slicks. Hearing that some of the tests indicated high bacteria counts, Rick and Terry unsuccessfully sought help from the County Health Department and the State Department of Environmental Quality and asked the Yacht Club Board to authorize a series of tests of samples, taken by an independent certified lab, in accordance with required sampling procedures. This is a four-week-long process from which we have back only about half of

the reports. In addition we have received copies of some or all of the tests taken by Gert and Bob. All of the test reports we have received so far this year have been printed in the Barker.

■ 3. All of the samples tested this year have been checked for both total coliform and E-coli.

■ 4. The tests for coliform are no longer even used by permitting agencies. For example, the tests Garrett Labs have been providing count total coliforms, many of which are harmless. Of all the coliforms counted in the test, only fecal, which is not segregated, may be harmful. Fecal coliforms include bacteria from both cold and warm-blooded beings.

Currently permitting agencies do not test for bacteria for cold-blooded beings. So a high coliform count doesn't really mean much.

■ 5. The test for intestinal bacteria for warm-blooded beings, which may or may not be disease bearing, is the test for E-coli. Of the dozens of E-coli test results we have seen this year, only a handful have levels above the normally acceptable limits. And even those haven't been consistent. However, a number of them seem to come from the area near the inlet by the Klappauf's. As a result, Rick and Terry have done more sampling up that stream. Hopefully this will lead to the source of the occasional elevated E-coli counts.

■ 6. Even though there was no direct evidence of sewage emanating from the new system into the lake, all the gravity mains have been dyed and checked for flows. The testing performed at an expense of \$3,000 yielded no indications of any leaks of sewage into the

lake.

■ 7. As the water quality committee report included in the Barker mentions, thanks largely to Rand Welch, a number of us were able to meet with the Township Board on Thursday 8/21/08. At this time, the Township Board agreed to contact both the Health Dept and Department of Environmental Quality on our behalf and introduced us to an area PhD in Water Quality who volunteered to work with a committee consisting of whoever signed up. Those were three big positives.

■ 8. The willingness of Rick and Terry, recently joined by Gordon Seyfarth, to continue ordering and monitoring tests, researching, and following these challenges wherever they may lead, are 3 more positives. Thanks guys.

■ 9. The patience, cooperation, and support of your Yacht Club Board and all the residents of Birch Lake in protecting our greatest common asset is our most meaningful and necessary positive.

■ 10. There have been numerous phenomena other than the sewer project that preceded, and therefore may have had something to do with, the slicks and diminished clarity. They include weather and atmospheric conditions, last winter's extensive solid freeze over, zebra mussels, Eurasian milfoil, chemically treating for Eurasian milfoil, dying, rotting Eurasian milfoil, some or any of the 500 or more invasive species that have been deposited in the Great Lakes that may have found their way to Birch Lake.

We hope you find this information helpful.
-Paul Fallon -Commodore 2009

Update on Purple Loosestrife

WHAT IS IT? — Purple loosestrife is a plant that was accidentally introduced in to the United States and then distributed as an ornamental. It is most easily identified during its flowering period from July to September. This spike shaped "purple" flower can be seen in ditches, streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, and other moist, shallow water sites. This plant is an upright, hardy perennial, four to eight feet tall and most often found in a group.

EFFECTS: Purple loosestrife invades marshes, ditches and lakeshores, quickly replacing cattails and other native wetland plants. These plants form dense stands that ducks, geese, muskrats and frogs cannot use for food or cover.

SPREAD: Purple loosestrife will grow from the roots of an established plant, however, the plants spread mainly by seed. Having up to 300,000 per stalk, these tiny seeds can live in the soil and water for many years and can be transported great distances by humans, animals and water. The seeds can be trans-

ported to other wetland areas via the mud on birds and ducks feet, in the fur muskrat, mink and beaver, or on the shells of turtles. Humans can also unknowingly transport the seeds via the mud on their shoes, boots, waders and clothing.

BIRCH LAKE PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

We continue to control the spread of purple loosestrife on Birch Lake. During the months of July and August we removed plants from three locations. Two of the locations were on the west shore where loosestrife has been every year. However, the third site was found on the south shore where we haven't seen it for years. We will keep a close watch.

I want to thank Bruce Wagner for all of his help in removing the plants and also to the many caring residents who help us keep an eye out and report any sightings.

-Rick Russwurm



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-Pat Keirn

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Stu's Star Stuff



Counting the stars in the sky

This is a good evening for counting stars. The glowing band of the Milky Way arcs high overhead, from W-shaped Cassiopeia in the north, through the bright Summer Triangle overhead, to teapot-shaped Sagittarius in the south.

In all, about 5,000 individual stars are visible to the unaided eye. Millions more blur together to form the Milky Way's hazy band. They're all in the broad disk of our Milky Way galaxy.

The total number of stars in the Milky Way is uncertain. Estimates range from a hundred billion up to about four hundred billion.

There's no way to actually count the stars in the galaxy. For one thing, there are just too many of them. For another, many stars are hidden behind dense clouds of gas and dust, so we can't see them.

So astronomers have to estimate the

number. They use the galaxy's total mass, then estimate how the stars break down by mass.

The total mass is about a trillion times the mass of the Sun. But most of that is in the form of invisible dark matter. Normal matter, like stars and planets, makes up around a tenth of the total.

The question then is how many stars are big and heavy, and how many are small and lightweight. From counting the stars in our neighborhood, astronomers know that only a small percentage are much heavier than the Sun, and most are much lighter than the Sun.

So astronomers apply different estimates -- and come up with wildly different counts of the number of stars in the Milky Way. Why don't you take your own count? There are still many, many great nights to enjoy the show before it gets cold. But even after it does the sky is typically even more clear than in the

summer. And no matter what time of year you get out there to watch, it's still free. Have a great fall/winter/spring and I'll see you back here again next summer. Maybe. ;o)

-Stu Spratt

The Moon tonight:

The moon for August 23 (at Midnight)

Illuminated Fraction: 0.003

0.5 days since new moon



Horoscope for Birch Lakers

ARIES 9Mar. 21- April 20)

You can make drastic changes in your professional direction this week. Emotionally you won't see things accurately. Be sure that you have all the facts before you take action. Mingle with those who can help you get ahead. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

TAURUS 9Apr. 21- may 21)

A residential move may be necessary to get a better job. Changes in your residence may be financially favorable. Don't push your mate away. Exhaustion combined with overindulgence could result in minor health problems. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

GEMINI 9May 22-June 21)

You can accomplish a lot if you put some effort into household duties or redecorating plans. Emotionally you won't see things accurately. Visit those less fortunate than your self; be sure to help them with their personal problems. You must get out and mingle. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

CANCER 9June 22-July 22)

Get involved in jobs that require creative input. You can win points with both peers and superiors. Financial limitations may add to your depression. New love connections can be made through group associations. Your willingness to help others can and will lead to fatigue if you don't learn to say no. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

LEO 9July 23-Aug 22)

You can complete any projects efficiently, especially if you put the effort in yourself. Be sure to get involved in self improvement programs that will bring you in contact with interesting people. Unexpected bills may set you back. You will be entertained and intrigued by the logic foreigners possess. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

VIRGO 9Aug. 23 -Sept. 23)

Relax I and enjoy what you've accomplished when you're finished. Wait and get all the information before consulting your boss. Channel your efforts into achieving your goals. Don't allow your lover to take advantage of your good nature. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

LIBRA 9Sept. 24 -Oct. 23)

You will be able to talk about emotional problems with your partner. Be discreet and don't reveal any personal information. Your intellectual wit will bring greater popularity with your peers. You could be cornered, so be prepared to tell the truth. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

SCORPIO 9Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)

Groups and organizations that indulge in social events to raise money will be conducive to meeting new and exciting lovers. Your family needs to spend some time with you, too. Pleasure trips will turn out to be better than anticipated. Emotional upset may prevail on the domestic scene if you have neglected your duties or your mate. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

SAGITTARIUS 9Nov. 23 -Dec. 21)

Try to be patient and understanding. Sudden disruptions will cause upset and a change of routine in your home environment. You should be able to tie up loose ends this week. You can make a serious attempt at quitting those bad habits that you've picked up over the years. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

CAPRICORN 9Dec 22.- Jan. 20)

Channel your energy into passionate interludes with your lover. Added knowledge will give you the edge when dealing with peers. Put your emotional energy into passion not anxiety Be careful while traveling. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

AQUARIUS 9Jan. 21 -Feb. 19)

Back off if you want to keep the relationship intact. Real estate and joint financial ventures will be profitable. If you go shopping, only take what you can afford to part with. Residential moves will be favorable, and larger quarters the most probable direction. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

PISCES 9Feb. 20-Mar. 20)

Relatives will not agree with the way you are dealing with your personal problems. You won't impress anyone by being overly generous. Be careful how you handle friends and relatives, they may take things the wrong way. Situations in your personal life are moving a little fast lately. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

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FOR SALE: Boat Lift — 3600 lb, electric, with new extended custom cover (w/ custom openings). \$3,000. 574-514-3179, 476-1616.

SHORE STATION/BOAT LIFT FOR SALE. 10 years old, but still working great. Best offer. You can take a look at 15236 Birch Lakeshore. Call (734) 678-7268.

FOR SALE: Barnett Butterfly Sailboat, good condition. \$475. 574-274-6327

FOR SALE: Escape 9 foot sailboat/rowboat. Great condition. \$300 or best offer. Call Eric Odenwald, 476-8840.

FOR SALE: 15' Aluminum canoe \$400 call 476-2744

FOR SALE — MC Scow, sail # 1141. One-owner; in excellent condition. Trailer included. Contact Dick or Sue Peterson, 269-445-2050

FOR SALE: Refrigerator/Freezer with ice maker about 20 cubic feet. \$75. Sante 269-783-4666 After August 18th.

FOR SALE: Solid oak (rare cross cut grain) dining room table, six upholstered chairs and matching buffet & china cabinet. Also includes 2 extensions. \$700.00 A 5 burner electric counter cook top by Kenmore. Excellent condition \$95.00. Call Tom DeCocker for further info. 476-9821.

FOR RENT

FOR RENT — New Luxury Condo in Daytona, Fla. for rent Sept. thru Dec. 2008— Over 2100 SF w/panoramic balconies overlooking ocean, speedway & Daytona; 3 br, 2

baths w/walk-in showers; Fully furnished with washer/dryer, dishes & NEW appliances; King bed in master suite, 2 queen beds in guest bedroom, 2 twin beds in 3rd bedroom; Large, private pool on site; Hot tub; tennis courts; par 3 golf course; billiard/game room; \$750/ week or \$1800/month— includes taxes, cleaning (no hidden fees). Contact Angela Bergan at 561 603 5522

ALSO FOR RENT — Naples, Fla cottage near Vanderbilt Beach Road. Over 1500 SF home; 3 br, 2 baths; Fully furnished w/ washer/ dryer, dishes, appliances; king bed in master suite, 2 twin beds in guest br, 2 twin beds in third br. Screened patio with grill. Near beach, 3 Shopping Centers Golf Courses Nearby. \$750/ week or \$1500/ month includes taxes, cleaning (no hidden fees). Contact Angela Bergan at 561 603 5522

LAKE HOME FOR RENT - The Bouwkamps are willing to rent their lake home through May of 09'. If you are interested please call (734)358-6112 or 476-1001. Further home details are located on the flyers available on the for sale sign.

PERSONAL AND BOAT STORAGE AVAILABLE — Mill Creek Storage in Williamsville has individual, self-locking storage available and is now taking reservations for boat storage. Individual 10x18' units are \$60 per month or boat storage in the building is quoted by the foot. For more information call (734)358-6112.

FOUND

Found on the Northshore: Inflatable white tube @ 9 feet long. Call 476-9823

Found a turtle raft on the east side, call Odenwald's at 269-476-8840, or 708-307-5245, if it is yours.

FOUND - Green Swim Ways brand SubSkate. Found Wednesday 8/20 - floating on the East side. Contact Groszek at 476-9698 for return.

LOST

Lost: Orange and Black kayak paddle. Says "Pelican" on the blade. If found, please call Camp T at 476-2177.

The Tom Troeger family lost a life vest last week and wondered if it floated up to somebody's shore. It is pink and black. 476-2319 or 574-202-0404.

WANTED

LOOKING for an MC 16ft sailboat. JP and Marlow Hoyer, 476-2656

Wanted, used Sunfish. 574-274-6327

Wanted: Sunfish Sail, please call Eric at 269-476-8840, or 708-307-5246.

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Winter Watch — If you want someone who lives on Birch Lake to watch your property during the winter, call Steve Quinlan - 476 8802 or email stevequinlan2@yahoo.com I can provide a customized watch program ranging from a weekly walk around the exterior of your house to full time video surveillance over the internet. Go to <http://sjq.tripod.com/winter.htm> for additional details.

THANKS

Thank you to the nice Carpenter Family who found our lost ski and returned it to us! The Odenwalds.

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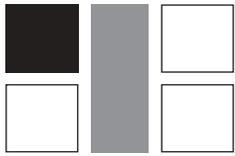
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We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer at Birch Lake!

-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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