



Barker "Feet of the Week" ... Hmmm ... you just never know what's going to get sent in to the Barker for publication ...

## COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

**H**ot, Hot, Hot! That was the weather last weekend. It was perfect weather for our houseful of visiting kids and grandkids because the only place anyone wanted to be was in the water! I can't think of a more relaxing way to spend a summer afternoon than floating around in the middle of Birch Lake. The biggest decision of the afternoon was whether to cannonball or pencil drop off the side of the pontoon. In case you're wondering, I did neither. I just floated and cheered everyone on.

I hear the ladies had a great time at the golf outing followed by a wonderful lunch at the Yacht Club last Friday. Thanks again to Patty Luecht for putting it all together. The men's outing is this Friday, and I'm sure they will have a wonderful time as well.

Chas Grundy and Pete Soldato have been working hard getting everything ready. The weather forecast (at least as of this writing) looks to be about perfect.

Mark your calendars for next Saturday, August 6. You won't want to miss our annual corn and sausage roast.

Come on down to the Yacht Club and enjoy summer dining at its finest! Fresh picked sweet corn hot off the grill, steaming sausage (or chicken breast), and all the side dishes to go with it – I can't wait!

Since the arrival of the "dog days of summer," I have been wondering how that phrase got started. I decided to do a little investigating. I was picturing dogs laying around on their backs, panting, hardly able to move due to the heat, but what I found was that the phrase actually goes back to the ancient Greeks and their beliefs about the dog star, Sirius, and its position in the heavens. It was then I decided I was out of my league, and this was material for Stu's Star Stuff, not Commodore Sue Stuff. So if your curiosity is up, you'll have to do your own investigating.

Whatever its origin, try to keep cool and enjoy these dog days of summer!

~Commodore Sue

### Corn & sausage roast – August 6

Just a week to go until the Summer's most delicious event arrives. Make plans to bring your family and neighbors for a feast you won't forget! The annual Corn & Sausage Roast is

## 2016 Birch Lake Calendar

Aug. 6.....Corn & Sausage Roast  
 Aug. 12 .....Friday Night Flotilla  
 Aug. 27 .....BLYC Fall Dinner  
 (at the Yacht Club)  
 Aug. 27 .....Vital's 46th Anniversary  
 (and just 126 days until Sandy retires)

**BLYC Board Meetings (9 am)**  
 Aug. 6, Sept. 10 @ BLYC

**More info as available.; Dates subject to change; Watch the Barker for updates!**

next Saturday, August 6. From 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Yacht Club we'll be serving savory meals of your meat choice, roasted corn, four sides, cookies and lemonade or iced tea. We'll have meals with hot dogs, brats and chicken breasts (but we'll only have a limited supply of chicken breasts – first come, first served – so plan ahead). No reservations required! If you come hungry you'll be leaving with a smile, and get to visit with your neighbors to boot! Hope to see you there!

We are looking for anyone interested in shucking corn. It's fun to greet your neighbors and see the smiles on their faces. Shucking shifts last 30 min-

# — Birch Lake Notes —

utes so you can enjoy your own sausage and corn dinner. Call Blair at 476-9862 if you want to be a short shift shucker.

## Friday Night Flotilla!

Due to past years successful flotillas, let's do it again! Meet in the middle of the lake with your boat on Friday, August 12 at 6:30 pm. Boats will be tied together and we will walk from boat to boat sharing food and camaraderie. Bring an appetizer; be there or be square! Look for the boats in the middle!

## 2017 Birch Lake calendars here

Thanks to all the photographers who submitted photos for the 2017 Birch Lake calendar. This year we received over 100 pictures. It was hard to narrow the selection to just thirteen and a little sad to have leave out so many wonderful photos. The calendars are available now. You can get yours from Vickie Rogers (476-2383), Linda Yoshizawa (476-2308), Sue Williams (476-8886), or Carla Chester (476-1010). They'll also be on sale at the remaining Birch Lake events as long as they last. The cost for each calendar is \$15.

## Ladies Golf results

Last Friday, August 22, 27 fun-loving women teed off at the Diamond Lake Golf Course for the annual Birch Lake Ladies FUN Golf Outing. As luck would have it, a morning cloud cover



## Another beautiful day at Birch Lake

*Thanks to our Artist-in-Residence, Duffy Dufour for the great Birch Lake art ...*

kept the temperatures relatively comfortable for most of the 9 holes and our great drink-cart lady, Staci Whiteman, made sure we were well hydrated. Thanks Staci for taking care of us! Bob Waddle made sure the event was documented for posterity and took team pictures. It may not sound like a big deal, but you should try getting 27 women to stand still and have their picture taken ... an almost impossible task.

We were so fortunate to have such generous sponsors for this year's golf outing! Without their support, we would not be able to offer the hole prizes to our golfers. Our awesome sponsors were Denise, Jeff, and Wrigley Smitley, Terry Curtis, Bob and Sue Waddle, Rick and Good Patti Russwurm, Phil and Sandy Vitale, Mike and Amy Lutz, Linda Curtis, Pat McGann and Lee Oswald. We can't thank you enough for your gen-

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# — Birch Lake Notes —

erosity.

The teams and their places were:  
(1st and 2nd teams tied, went to best hole to determine winner)

1st Place - Carla Chester, Amy Lutz, Julie Greene, Bad Patty Luecht

2nd Place - Linda Curtis, Sue Waddle, Carol McCoy, Jackie Frew

3rd Place - Claudia Phipps, Brittany Marlow, Sue Vandewalle, Allyson Weaver-Gills

4th Place - Denny Weesner, Mardy Miller, Becky Wiseman, Lynn DeCocker

5th Place - Lois Groszek, Pat Guzzi, Sherrie Tubinis, Judy Gibson

6th Place - Debbie Soldato, Barb

Cassady, Connie Young, Pat Merrill

7th Place - Blair Garceau, Vickie Rogers, Linda Bergan, and Leslie King

CONGRATS TO ALL!

After golf, we all went to the BLYC for lunch. Many, many thanks to Denise Smitley, Sandy Baucus, and Deb Spratt for putting it all together for us! You ladies are absolutely the best! What a great job, and I don't believe that anyone could possibly have left hungry.

A big thanks to all of those behind the scenes that helped me tie it all together. Morgann Applegate for counting tees and keeping the number secret, Vickie Rogers for the fresh flower centerpieces, Katie Luecht and Parker Greene for being "hole helpers" and selling raffle tickets, Julie Greene for helping with gift bags, and everyone for keeping me

sane! My apologies to anyone I may have left out.

Thanks to everyone for making it a great day of golf, socializing and fun!!!

See you next year.

~Bad Patty

## Sailing news

While the Chicago to Mackinac fleet was raked by weekend storms, the America's Cup OD fleet sailed a regatta in Portsmouth, England. Sir Ben Ainslie led his British team to victory, besting Spithill and the US team by a single point. Land Rover BAR (Ben Ainslie Racing) not only won the event, they move to the top of the leaderboard for the ongoing Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series. Up next: a regatta in Toulon, France.

## Fire truck to be on display

Remembrance Rescue Project's FDNY Rescue 4 Fire Truck will be on display at the Middlebury, IN Fire Department during the Middlebury Summer Festival, Aug. 13, from 10 am to 8 pm. On Sept. 11, 2001, eight FDNY firefighters lost their lives trying to save others at the World Trade Center's South Tower. FDNY Rescue 4 was parked two blocks from the WTC's South Tower when the tower collapsed and destroyed this truck. FDNY Rescue 4 was restored and now is part of the Remembrance Rescue Project, a 100 percent volunteer program. The exhibit is a

mobile memorial and teaching tool for Modern American History. For information go to <http://www.remembrance.co/> or contact C. Marc Tjaden (West Side), Remembrance Rescue Project Volunteer at 260-710-3995.

## Walk for Life - "People Who Care"

Come join On August 27 from 9 am to noon and walk for Cancer fighters and survivors! Gather pledges and take a scenic walk is all it takes to make a difference. Proceeds will go to the Cass County Cancer Service, Inc. to help people with everyday expenses this is for residents of Cass County who are fighting cancer and need a helping hand.

There will be water stops along the route. A light lunch will be provided at the club after the walk. Bring your friends, family, along with smiles and cash. The walk will start at the Conservation Club, down Birch Road to the "swimming hole" then back.

For more information or to make a donation contact Connie Sue Hulse at (574) 333-8838.

## e-mail scam persists

A couple weeks ago I wrote about some emails supposedly from a Birch Laker (and past commodore) with a cryptic, abbreviated message and a note that it couldn't show the entire message but I should "click here" to view it. I warned that this was a scam and it



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# — Birch Lake Notes —

would hack your address list and email itself (with the virus) to everyone on it. Apparently it is still making the circuit around Birch Lake. Always be wary about opening unknown email attachments, even from trusted sources.

~editor

## August 2, 2016 Porter Township Primary Election candidates

In response to a reader request, here is the list of the candidates running for positions on the Porter Township Board of Trustees:

### Supervisor candidates:

Kim Evans, Republican

Cory E. Marlow, Republican  
Steven A. Northrup, Republican  
Terry Schutter, Republican

### Clerk Candidates:

Honna Gableman, Republican  
Marty Russell, Republican

### Treasurer Candidates:

Helen Croninger, Republican  
Tom Lutz, Republican

### Trustee Candidates:

Tom Harman, Republican  
David Nagy, Republican  
Julie Paksi, Republican  
Robert W. Schultze, Republican  
Leard Wylie, Republican

**Editor's note:** Since all the candi-

dates in the Aug.2 "primary" election are Republican, whoever wins will also be the winners in the general election and will fill the positions.

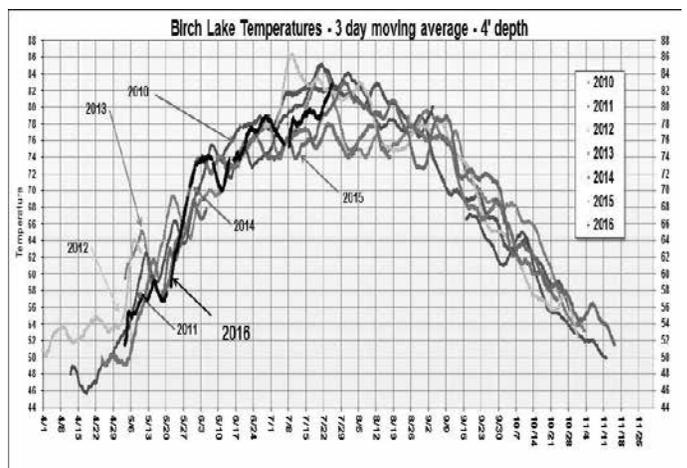
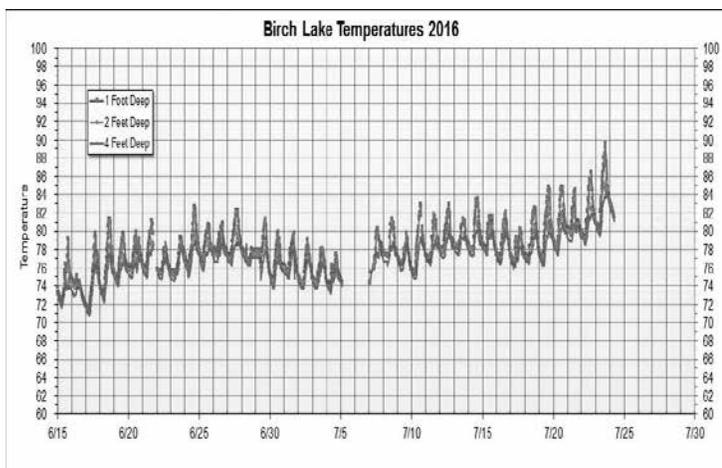
### Online content

The full, weekly printed Birch Barker is once again online this season, along with selected additional content ... just go to [www.philvitale.com](http://www.philvitale.com) and follow the links.

### Updates on Birch Lake sailing

Sailors! Send me your cell phone numbers if you want to be included in text alerts and updates on the status of

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## Recently sold Birch Lakes homes



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\* The number of sold lake homes is up 22% from 4/1/15 to 3/31/16 compared to 4/1/14 to 3/31/15. † Based on data from the Southwestern Michigan Association of Realtors, Sales of Inland Lake Homes and Properties, from 1/1/12 to 12/31/15 in Berrien, Cass and St. Joseph Counties. Sales of properties where agents represent both the buyer and seller are given 200% credit by the M.S.A.R.

# — Birch Lake Notes —

weekly sailing. 317 605 6421.

~Bad Patty

## **BLYC Welcoming Committee**

We are ready to rock and roll on our Welcoming Committee. If you know of a new neighbor please contact Vicky Rogers at 269-476-2383, Pam VanHuffel 269-244-3487 and Linda Curtis at 574-361-2629.

## **Birch Lake Pooch Parade**

The Third Annual Birch Lake Pooch Parade will be held on Saturday, September 3 (Raindate, September 4). Registration will begin at 10:30 am, the parade will start at 11. The grand marshal will be our own veterinarian Duffy Dufour.

Birch Lake dogs and their owners are invited to meet at Ed and Carla Chester's home to kick off Labor Day weekend with our annual Pooch Parade. After the 10:30 registration, the parade will begin at the Chesters' home at 11 and proceed north on Birch Road, making a loop at the Kinsey Street marina and ending back at the Chesters' house for the award ceremony.

Prizes will be awarded in these categories: Best Costume, Largest Dog, Smallest Dog, Cutest Dog, Best Owner-Pet Lookalike, Bushiest Tail, Longest Ears, and more. All canine participants will receive doggy treats!

### **Parade Rules:**

1. Animals must be current on vaccinations.
2. No aggressive animals or females in season.
3. Animals must be on a leash and in the control of the owners at ALL times. Costumes are encouraged.

Parking for spectators and participants will be available at designated marked areas along the parade route. Spectators, bring lawn chairs!

A donation box will be available for donations to the CASS COUNTY HUMANE SOCIETY and event expenses.

## **Printed Birch Barker**

The Birch Barker is a service of the Birch Lake Yacht Club and provided free of charge every weekend to all the

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**Patty Luecht  
476-2615**



homes on Birch Lake, thanks to our generous advertisers.

The Barker welcomes the submission of editorial and advertising materials for publication (at the discretion of the editor). The deadline for submitting ads and information for any Barker is by 3 pm on the Tuesday of the week before publication (example: the deadline for materials for the August 6 issue is 3 pm on Tuesday, July 26) ... thanks.

Send your kid-of-the-week to Birch

Barker, 63174 Birch Rd., Vandalia, MI 49095; put them in a ziplock and stick them in the stone mailbox at my home (east side), or email to me at sailorphil@philvitale.com

I'm at 476-1680 or sailorphil@philvitale.com. For questions or problems with delivery please contact Sue Williams (476-8886, email: smwillia@comcast.net) or Bob & Sue Waddle (476-3393 or email: sparkybob220@comcast.net).

~PV



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# **2016 BLYC FALL DINNER**

Saturday August 27<sup>th</sup> at the Yacht Club  
Door prizes!

It's a ***Black and White*** Party  
Dress in casual black and/or white

## **Social Hour 5:30**

Beer and Wine

***Wine tasting*** and food provided by Bacon Hill Kitchen and Pub

### **Appetizers**

Crostini with shrimp, avocado, sweet chili aioli with sesame seeds  
Sausage and Goat Cheese Stuffed Dates Wrapped with Crispy Bacon

## **Dinner 6:30**

Spring greens with toasted sunflower seeds, strawberries, blueberries, red onion, croutons, and  
lemon poppyseed vinaigrette

Assorted artisan breads and cornbread muffins with sweet honey butter

Smoked Pork Loin with strawberry balsamic barbeque sauce

Roasted potatoes with parmesan and garlic

Sugar snap peas with pine nuts

Assorted Banana, Boston, and Chocolate cream pies

## **Year End Wrap Up 7:30**

### **Ticket Price: \$25.00**

All tickets must be purchased by August 20<sup>th</sup>

Please see the following to purchase your ticket:

Carla Chester 476-1010

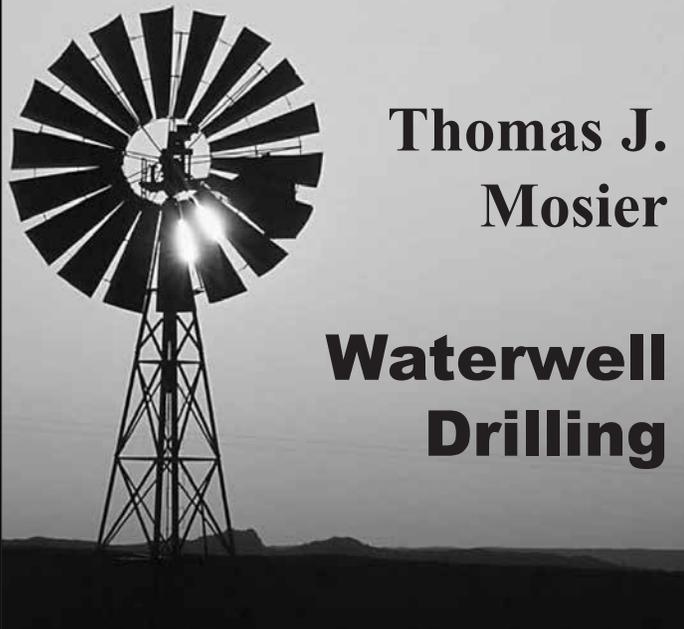
Vickie Rogers 476-2383

Katha Machalleck 476-2642

Julie Sheffieck 476-1849

Michelle Seyfarth 476-1319

*Tickets must be purchased in advance and presented at the door*



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# FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER

## Great sailing!

Last Sunday, was the first time we have sailed since July 4th, almost three weeks. One week we had little to no wind and the other week we had threatening storms that didn't even show up! It was great to finally get back out on the water and do some sailing. What a wonderful turnout we had, there was nine sunfish and eight Mc's, which made for some competitive racing. The winds were from about 5 to 10 mph with some gusts around maybe 15 mph or so!

I want to thank all the sailors that are coming out every Sunday, we seem to be getting a better turnout every week. It's nice to see the popularity of the sport coming back! In closing, I need to thank our great participates on the committee boat, Bad Patty, Questionable Patti, Katy Campbell and my wife Amy for all their help in starting the races and in recording the final results.

Until next week "Splice the main brace"

~Fleet Captain Mike~



## 2016 BLYC Season Sailing Results

Date ..... 24Jul ..... 24Jul ..... 24Jul ..... Total ..... Season ..... Races ..... %  
 Race ..... 12 ..... 13 ..... 14 ..... Points ..... Average ... Finished ... Finished

### MC Scow/Sailor 12

Scott Troeger #1489	1	2	2	18574	1548	12	00.0%
Jeff Smitley #2002	4	1	1	16668	1515	11	91.7%
Phil Vitale #500	5	7	6	12278	1364	9	75.0%
Harold Cranmer #1991/2550	6	8	3	16245	1354	12	100.0%
Bill Luecht #1579	2	3	4	15935	1328	12	100.0%
Barb Cassady #2435	3	6	8	8944	1278	7	58.3%
Bob King #1199	7	5	5	7644	1274	6	50.0%
Gib Eberhart #916	8	4	7	7447	1241	5	41.7%
Pat McGann #1735	DNS	DNF	DNS	11132	1237	8	66.7%

### Sunfish/Sailor 14

Rick Russwurm (Green/Blue)	2	1	3	17286	1571	11	78.6%
Peter Soldato	3	2	1	19250	1481	13	92.9%
Mike Lutz (Blue/Red/Yellow)	4	4	4	18561	1428	13	92.9%
Herb Cleveland	1	6	2	19366	1383	14	100.0%
Stewart Spratt	7	3	5	16133	1344	11	78.6%
Sandy Vitale (White)	5	7	7	6496	1299	5	35.7%
Katie Luecht	DNS	DNS	DNS	3746	1249	3	21.4%
Bob Niezgodski	9	9	8	16623	1187	14	100.0%
Stefan del Rossi	6	8	6	3539	1180	3	21.4%
Bill Butler	8	5	9	8189	1170	7	50.0%
Greg Cowan	DNS	DNS	DNS	3417	1139	3	21.4%
Brad Davis	DNS	DNS	DNS	3334	1111	3	21.4%
Camille Butler	10	10	10	12071	1097	11	78.6%

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), DSQ (Disqualified) scores as one place worse than last place (if 5 boats finished, you would have finished 6th, will be scored as 7th place).

DNF, DSQ not counted toward minimum number of races needed.

CB - sailor who serves on Committee Boat receives their season average place as of that date - 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

CREW - Counted toward completed races, Points go to skipper of boat.



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When it comes to choosing a Realtor, it's not about claims of having or selling the most listings. Nor is it about the claims of being the "Lake or Waterfront Expert." It's about who will provide you with a quality experience and good results from listing or searching to closing. Read what my clients have to say and then call me when you're ready to sell or buy.

**Elizabeth Carey and Steve Decker -- Sold our home on Indiana Lake**

"Vickie is an extremely dedicated professional who will make you feel like you are her top priority. She can grasp complicated situations easily, explain them to you accurately, and then wisely advise you as to what to do. We found her knowledgeable in many areas and helpful in many ways beyond her obligations as a Realtor. You will enjoy working with this personable, warm, trustworthy lady who will take the stress and strain of buying and selling a home off your shoulders and put them onto hers."

**Amanda North Druckeniller** "Working with Vickie to sell our home was a pleasure! Our home sat on the market for a year with another realtor. We switched to Vickie and had an offer within a month! Vickie is prompt, professional and very knowledgeable in her field. I strongly recommend her for your realty needs!"

**Tom Davidson -- Top qualities: Personable, Expert, High Integrity**

"Vickie did an excellent job in finding a house in Michigan that represented what I was looking for. She also was instrumental in providing detailed information on the history of my property and several adjacent Birch Lake properties which along with her knowledge of building regulations allowed me to obtain a reduction in property taxes. She is dependable, knowledgeable, and follows through. I would highly recommend her."

**Tony Clark -- Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres**

"Vickie is the hardest working and most knowledgeable Realtor I have ever known. I have flipped about 7 properties. She sold my partner's house on Eagle Lake in a couple of weeks. While another Realtor had the listing for 9 months. She helped with taxes, inspections and legal transfers that were outside of her realm of duties."

See more at [www.VickieHall.info](http://www.VickieHall.info) under the "resources" tab

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**Cory Marlow**

**A candidate for Porter Township Supervisor**, lives with his wife and their son on Shavehead Lake. Cory is Executive Vice President at Financial Partners Inc./Raymond James Financial Services in Elkhart, IN and is a partner with Bacon Hill Kitchen and Pub in Elkhart, IN.

Cory earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 2004 from Valparaiso University and his M.B.A. from Northern Illinois University in 2007.

Professionally, Cory has been awarded the Exemplar Financial Network Rising star award in 2013, The Spirit of Notre Dame Federal Credit Union in 2013, The Jackson National Stars Club in 2014 and 2015, and most recently has been named to the Michiana Forty Under 40 class of 2016.

Cory is active in the community. He serves on the board for Camp Tanadoona on Birch Lake, serves on the board for Cockopalooza, a local cancer fundraiser in Elkhart County, and is a member of the Greater Elkhart Young Professionals, Young Professionals Network of South Bend, and Pillars of Elkhart.

Cory's hobbies include golfing, boating, spending time with his family including his dog Ruby, snowmobiling, fishing, and cooking.

Cory's vision for the Township revolves around fairness, transparency, and fiscal responsibility, and he would be honored to help serve the local businesses and residents as Porter Township Supervisor.



**Honna Gableman**

**A candidate for Porter Township Clerk**, lives with her husband and two daughters on Shavehead Lake. Honna has a restaurant and business management background. She's held several positions in general management, dealing in financial processes, employee oversight, multi-site office operations, and key customer account management. Her industry experience includes a history with West Palm Pizza, Sweet Endings Desserts, and 10 years with Panera Bread.

Honna graduated from Constantine High School. She has 2 Specialized Associates Degrees from the Florida Culinary Institute of West Palm Beach. Her course emphasis included business management, global cuisine, and international baking and pastries.

Honna is active in the community. She has served on the Constantine Public Schools PTO Board for 3 years and was President for 2 years. She has also been a past Member at Large for the IC School Commission in Three Rivers for 2 years.

Honna enjoys spending spare time on the family farm near Elkhart and with family, friends, and neighbors on the lake. She has a commitment to the township where she is raising her two daughters. She is passionate about fairness and efficiency. She will focus on enhancing the township, making it an inviting environment for businesses and residents. Honna would consider it a privilege to serve her neighbors as Porter Township Clerk.



**Tom Lutz**

**A candidate for Porter Township Treasurer**

Owner and President of Barromean Rings, a Michigan Corporation.

Owner and Driver of a Motorsports Team

35 year Management Career in the Recreational Vehicle Industry

University of Illinois - Criminal Justice

Home Owner and full time family resident in Porter Township since 1981

First family home on Baldwin Lake 1963

Founder and 3 time President of Long and Coverdale Lake Association

Current President of Long and Coverdale Lake Association

Military Service - Vietnam

Army Sergeant, Combat Infantry Badge, Combat Center Sniper Course Graduate

# BLYC Ladies Golf Fun Tournament/Outing



Photos courtesy of the  
**SparkyCam**



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## Elect Steve Northrup

For Porter Township Supervisor



VOTE Aug. 2 to ELECT

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- **Accountable** and courteous to every township resident.
- **Accessible and Available** to listen and consider all views and opinions.

Steve Northrup  
Ph# 269-476-1275  
13562 Harvey Street

I am a lifelong resident of Cass County and my family still resides in this area. I moved to Porter Township with my wife Christine in 2002. I retired after 32 years of service with the Cass County Road Commission and then spent 6 years with Great Lakes Chloride in Michigan Sales.

My two terms as Porter Township Trustee have afforded me the opportunity to address many issues which affected the lives of our residents which included the negotiation of contracts to secure safe and affordable services needed while maintaining a balanced budget.

I created a long-term plan to upgrade all township roads used by our residents. This plan includes directing the dust control, gravel maintenance, and securing cost-effective long-term maintenance for our paved roads.

I have also served as liaison to the SEPSA board and as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals and have gained extensive knowledge regarding the importance of careful study before making any decisions affecting all township residents.

As a Veteran and life member of the Post #4054 Veterans of Foreign Wars, I promise to uphold and protect those rights and freedoms guaranteed to each of our citizens of Porter Township, State of Michigan, in these United States of America.

- Keep us moving in a **Good Direction.**
- Elect an experienced **Public Servant.**
- Elect a leader you can **TRUST.**

**Elect Steve Northrup**

*Paid for by the Committee to Elect Steve Northrup*

# — Barker Kids of the Week —



**ABOVE LEFT:** Two Slanders, Two Karceskis, and Three Pettys (all north siders) enjoying the heat at the lake!

**ABOVE :** Alan and Pam Van Huffel (southside) entertained the Van Huffel side of the family last Saturday. Becky and Sam Van Huffel, along with Sara and Jason Holzwarth and 2 daughters, Lilly and Ella from Aurora, IL were there. Also, Al and Pam's daughter Michele Talos and family joined in the fun (HOT) day!



**LEFT:** The Boys of Summer at Jimmy's ... from left, Tim Burchell, Kevin Bernaciak, Barry DeCoudres, Ed Chester, John Ball and Tom Lacy.



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# — Barker Kids of the Week —



**At left:** On her very first trip to Birch Lake, leap-day-baby Mia Olympia McGann on her Papa's name sake MC sailboat.

**Above Center:** Former Birch Laker Julie Greene recoiling in terror as her son Parker and former next door neighbor Katie Luecht (east side) chase her in a golf cart at the Ladies Golf Outing last week

**Above Right:** Lily Bergan, granddaughter of Jim and Linda Bergan, enjoying an evening boat ride along with Gus.

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# STU'S STAR STUFF



## The sun's solar twin discovered

**T**he Sun is a special star. After all, it shines on Earth, making life possible on our little planet. So when scientists look for life on distant planets, they naturally begin their search with stars that are like the Sun.

Stars that are exactly like the Sun -- so-called "solar twins" if you will -- are rare. But astronomers in Australia recently identified a solar twin in the Big Dipper. They say the star is the second-best solar twin yet found.

The star takes its name from a catalog listing -- HD 98618. Like the Sun, it's a yellow star. Also like the Sun, it's a main-sequence star, if you will, so it shines because it's converting hydrogen into helium in its core.

The star is almost exactly the same mass and brightness as the Sun, too. And it has about the same abundance of heavy elements such

as iron and oxygen -- elements that are crucial, if you will, for the formation of planets and life.

Finally, the star is almost exactly the same age as the Sun. So if a planet like Earth orbits the star, and if life has developed in the same way that it developed on Earth, then HD 98618 is an excellent target for the search for life-bearing worlds.

From its distance of 126 light-years, the star is bright enough to see through binoculars. It's in the bowl of the Big Dipper, which hangs in the northwest in early evening. And when you gaze at the Big Dipper's bowl, keep in mind that someone there may be gazing back, enjoying the show too. And I'll be it's also free for them. Next week, Venus, if you will.

~Stu Spratt

Celebrating more than 52 Years  
at Birch Lake

### The Moon for this Saturday

(At Midnight, US Central time,  
as viewed from the Northern Hemisphere)

**Illuminated Fraction: 0.080**  
**2.6 days before new moon**



**Sunrise: 6:35am**  
**Sunset: 9:05pm**  
**Moonrise: 3:30am**  
**Moonset: 6:20pm**  
**Day length: 14h 29m**

## — Barker Kids of the Week —



*A marriage proposal magically happened out at the end of the rickety old Lazy Lodge Pier over the 4th of July. On bended knee with diamond in hand, Joe Ring proposed to Caroline Frurip, grand daughter of Sonia Sanders and daughter of Nina and Dave. They are both Doctors of Physical Therapy, practicing in Manhattan and are planning a September 2017 wedding in the Big Apple!*

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# YOUR HOROSCOPE

**Aries (March 21-April 19)** A quick recap of where you are right now is you are entering a fun-filled, romantic, creative month ahead! Accept invitations to party as well as to express your creative talents. Enjoy playful times with children. Continue to look for ways to improve your job or get a better job because you can still do this.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20)** Your focus on home and family continues to be strong. Family gatherings are likely because you are entertaining at home. You are also focused on home repairs and redecorating. Meanwhile, opportunities for vacations and fun still abound! Grab every chance for a big or little vacation because by next year, you will be working hard.

**Gemini (May 21-June 20)** You're entering a busy, fast-paced month full of short trips, errands and conversations with others. You will enjoy this because you're eager to enlighten people about something. In fact, the next four weeks are excellent for writers, teachers, actors and salespeople. Continue to make home improvements because these will benefit you now and in the future.

**Cancer (June 21-July 22)** Earnings and financial matters continue to be your focus for the next few weeks. Trust your moneymaking ideas because you can boost your income or make money on the side. Many of you will buy beautiful things for yourself and loved ones. In part, this is because you feel playful, which is why you are devoting energy to fun events.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)** This is your powerful time! The Sun, Mercury and Venus are all in your sign making you diplomatic, charismatic and charming! This is a good thing because tension on the home front is present due to residential moves, visiting relatives or some kind of increased pressure.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** Because your birthday is a month away, you are waiting in the wings. But this doesn't mean you should stand there getting dusty. Au contraire! Use the next few weeks to plan what you want your new year to be all about. Make goals with deadlines. Smart goals are: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound. Dumb goals are dreary, unimportant, mind-numbing and boring. Your primary goal right now is to establish a home base that you could rely on - something that is your refuge.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)** This is a popular time! Not only are you active with clubs, groups and associations, you are also enjoying the company of creative people as well as younger friends. You can benefit from these interactions by sharing your hopes for the future with others to get their feedback.

**Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)** You are high energy now with fiery Mars in your sign. Mars will stay there until August so make the most of this! It's probably wise to do physical sports to blow off some of this extra steam. People notice you now with the Sun at the top of your chart and they see you in flattering terms. Since this will last for about a month, use it to your advantage. This is a strong time for you!

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)** If you can possibly travel, do so because three planets now urge you to break free of boundaries and broaden your horizons. Travel for pleasure! Travel to learn! Romance with someone from another culture or a different country might blossom. Many things are happening since you had to give up so much during since 2011 to 2015 - and now you are on a new trajectory.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** In the next several weeks, you will benefit from the wealth and resources of others, which means it's a good time to ask for favors, or to borrow something, including a loan or a mortgage from a bank or a financial institution. It's also a passionate time for intimate relationships.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** This is an excellent time because your relations with others are so smooth. The only downside is you need more sleep in the next few weeks. It's important that you don't sell out to others because you will feel resentful. And yet, you have to respond to the responsibilities of these relationships. Find that balance.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)** One of the reasons this is such a positive time for your sign is this is a fabulous time for partnerships and close friendships. As I mentioned before, this is the best year to get married in over a decade for Pisces people. In the next few weeks, your strongest focus is on work and relating to coworkers; and this is equally positive! Some of you will also be enthusiastic about improving your health and buffing your bod.

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# BIRCH BARKER FUNNIES



Welcome to Elkhart

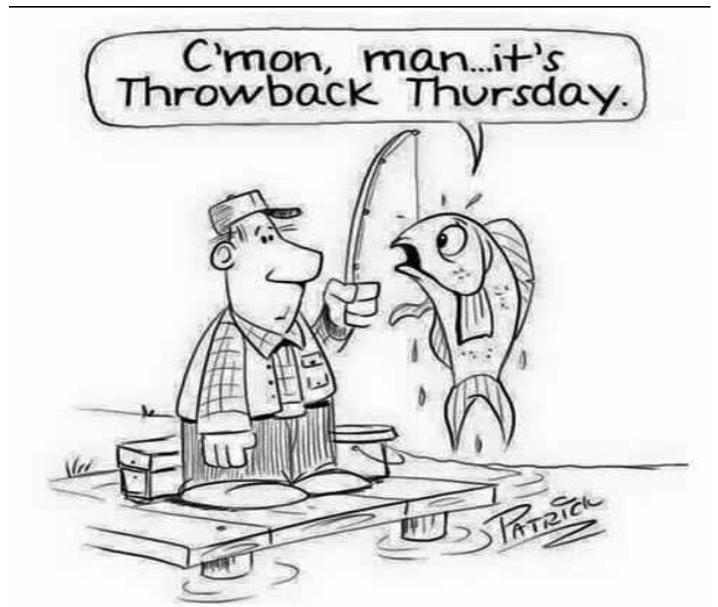
photo by Blair Garceau



**FLAT TIRE IN ALASKA**



Installed a cat door. Received dog...



C'mon, man...it's  
Throwback Thursday.

**I'm glad you're  
learning to laugh  
at yourself.  
  
That was kind of  
getting awkward  
for the rest of us.**



**THEY ASKED ME WHERE I  
CAUGHT MY FISH,**

**I SAID IN THE WATER**



# ~Birch Lake Recipes~



*Provided Exclusively to the Birch Barker from Mrs. Ima Foodnudge*

## Caprese Chicken

**"I love Caprese salad and I'm always trying to find new ways to make chicken dishes and eat a bit healthier. Plus the basil in my garden is growing out of control! Everyone who's made it raves about it and makes it again and again!"**

### Ingredients:

- 4 (6 ounce) skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 1 cup Italian salad dressing
- 1 tablespoon Italian herb seasoning
- 1 tablespoon chicken seasoning (such as Grill Mates® Montreal Chicken Seasoning)
- 2 tablespoons Canola oil
- 4 (1/2 inch thick) slices fresh mozzarella

cheese

- 4 (1/2 inch thick) slices tomato
- 4 large fresh basil leaves
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

### Directions:

1. Place chicken breasts, Italian salad dressing, Italian herb seasoning, and chicken seasoning into a resealable plastic bag, knead bag several times to coat chicken with marinade, and squeeze air from the bag. Seal and refrigerate 4 to 6 hours.

2. Preheat oven to 500 degrees F (260 degrees C).

3. Pour Canola oil into a large cast-iron or ovenproof skillet over medium-high

heat. Heat the oil until a small droplet of water pops in the oil. Remove chicken breasts from marinade and discard used marinade. Place chicken breasts into hot oil, fry for 2 minutes, and flip chicken.

4. Place skillet into the preheated oven and bake until chicken is no longer pink inside and the juices run clear, about 12 minutes. Top each chicken breast with a slice of mozzarella cheese and a tomato slice.

5. Return to oven and bake until cheese has melted, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer chicken breasts to a serving platter and top each with a basil leaf and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar.

## Birch Barker Sudoku Puzzle of the Day

6		2		4			8	
		5					1	7
			9		8			
			6					8
2	4			1			7	6
8					2			
			5		9			
7	2					8		
	6			8		2		1

# — Camp Tannadoonah —

**H**appy Holidays! It's Holidays Week at camp right now. On Sunday we celebrated New Years, and had a New Year's party with a high school musical-themed talent show. Each cabin prepared a skit or performance for the show, and then individual campers and staff had an opportunity to demonstrate their own talents.

Monday we celebrated Valentine's Day, and the staff decorated the dining hall with hearts. Monday night is always cabin night, and cookout. So on Monday night, each cabin gets a bucket of supplies to cook their meal over the fire, and then they plan an activity with just their own cabin. This week's cookout meal was 'walking tacos' – they cook the taco meat over the fire, and put it into a bag of Freetos, along with all their taco toppings and eat the tacos right out of the bag.

Tuesday was Easter. For breakfast we had Easter eggs – the kitchen staff hard boiled and dyed eggs for us! For evening activity we had an Easter egg hunt (also known as dice game). The campers work in teams to search camp for their Easter eggs – each team has their own color they have to find, and on each egg is a number, 1-12. The team comes to the dining

hall and rolls the dice to determine which numbered egg they have to find, then goes out and finds it. When they return to camp with the correct colored and numbered egg, they have to do a stunt or sing a song before they can roll the dice for their next egg.

Wednesday we celebrated Halloween, and capped off the day by trick or treating around the lake. We hope that the lake residents we saw, and sang camp songs to, enjoyed this as much as our campers did!

Thursday we had Thanksgiving, and even had a Thanksgiving feast for dinner. And we ended the week with Christmas on Friday, and had a visit from Santa Claus!

This week was also a special week for staff, because it was Tannadoonah Fairy week. One week each summer, the staff draw names for Tannadoonah Fairy or "TF" week. Your TF is sort of like a secret Santa – they give you little gifts, do nice things for you, and leave little notes. But they also get to play pranks on each other!

The campers have a blast seeing their counselors have to do silly things at meals, wear funny costumes, sing goofy songs, etc., in order to get prizes or treats from their TF. And the TFs can also steal each other's beds and

other belongings, and hide them all over camp. Some of the creative ideas this year included stealing all of a counselor's left shoes, leaving only her rain boots, and sending her on a scavenger hunt to locate her shoes. Or making two counselors each lunch in a canoe in the middle of the dining hall – with life jackets on! Or making a male counselor wear a tiara and a tutu all day, and carry a fairy wand.

And also this week we are at 100 percent capacity for campers! We have 125 kids here this week – 112 for overnight and 13 day campers. Every bed in camp is full, and we're at the maximum that we're allowed to have at camp under our license! The total for the summer stands at 909, exceeding our goal for the year. Of those 909, 251 are new campers this year. It's exciting to see so many new and returning faces at camp!

Just a note to mark on your calendars: Our final council fire, and candlelight ceremony at the lake will take place on Friday, August 12 this year. We usually start down the waterfront stairs with our candles around 9 pm on that night, so come out in your boats and we'll serenade you to close out our camp season.

Thank you!



**CAMP TANNADOONAH**  
BIRCH LAKE

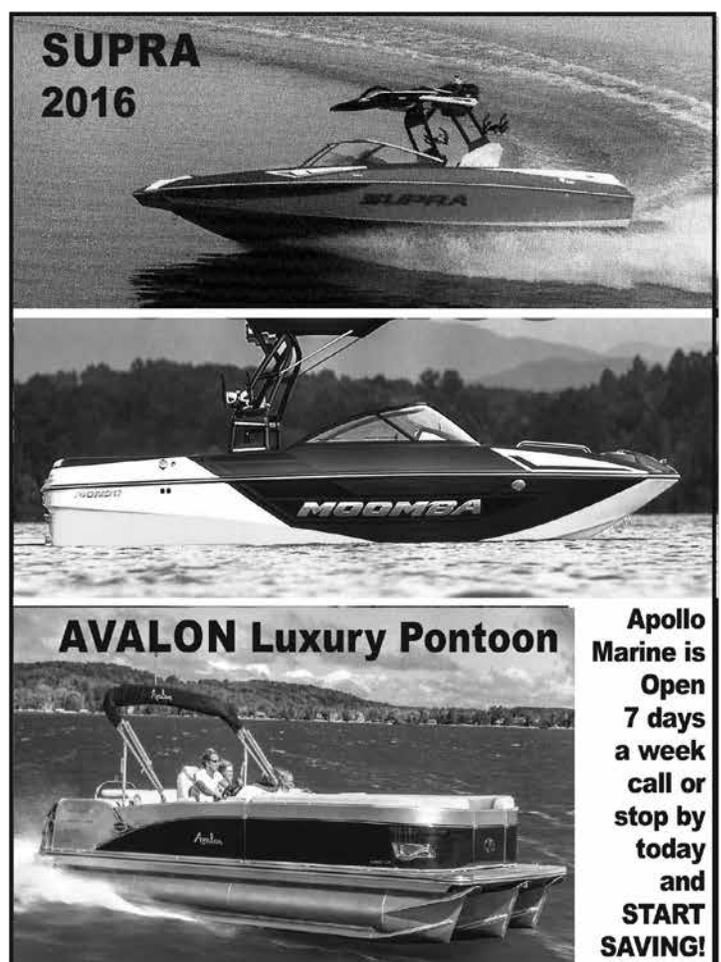
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## FOUND



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Found: **Styrofoam noodle (pink) and boogie board (blue)**. Call Tom Kuhn 708-772-7373/Jan Temple (847-846-8600)

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- \$\_\_\_ - Misc.

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