

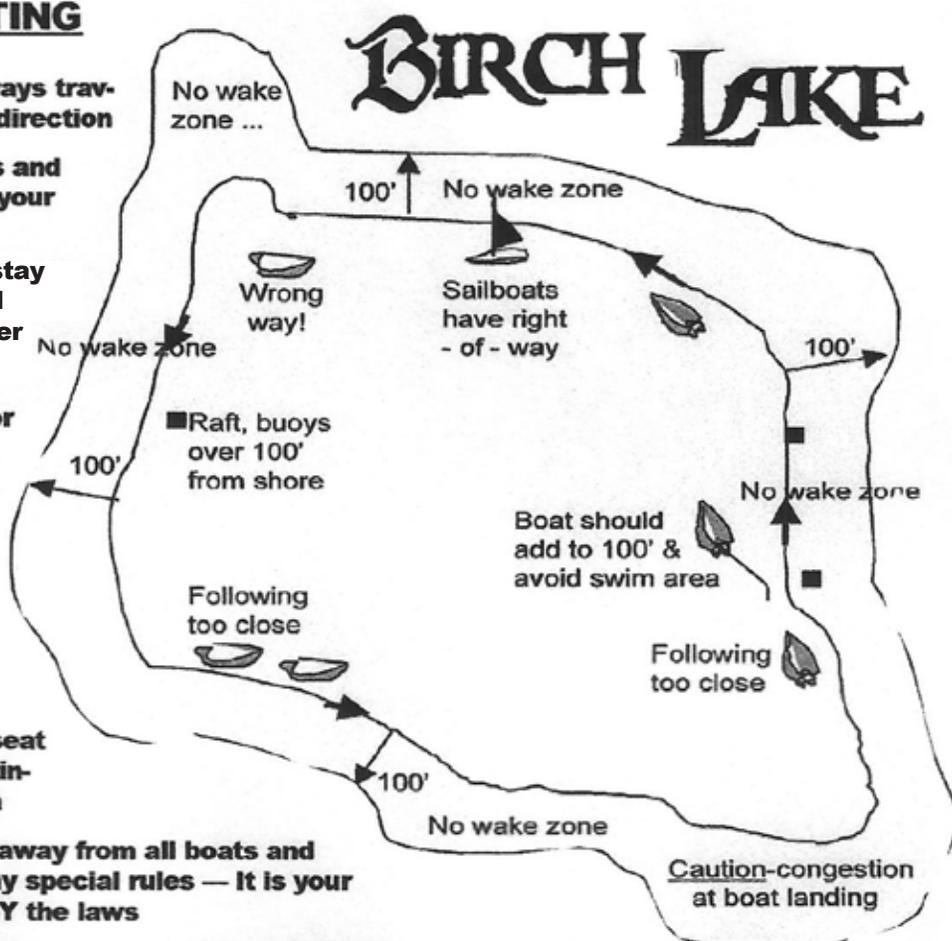
The weekend of **May 28 2016**

Birch Barker

The official summer publication of the **Birch Lake Yacht Club**

COMMON SENSE BOATING

- * No matter what your speed, always travel in a **COUNTER CLOCK-WISE** direction
- * Go **SLOW** near other boats, rafts and shore. You are responsible for your wake.
- * Take your time and give room - stay **100'** from shore, other boats and rafts when you are travelling over wake speed
- * When pulling someone on skis or a tube, you **MUST** have an observer. Watch out for other boats and be sure to add the length of your tow line to the 100' clearance rule
- * There must be one **USCG-approved LIFE JACKET** for every person on board, as well as one throwable device (seat cushion, etc.), a horn, a fire extinguisher, and a valid registration
- * **PWCs (Jet Skis) must stay 100' away from all boats and other PWCs. Jet skis have many special rules — It is your responsibility to know and OBEY the laws**
- * **Be responsible for everyone on your boat — safety is NO ACCIDENT!**



COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Here comes Summer! We have been waiting a long time for your arrival! However, things have already started happening at the Yacht Club. We know better than to wait for summer before getting our season started! The Yacht Club Board has already had their first meeting and has lots of exciting things planned for you this summer. Check out the Schedule of Events in this Barker.

If you are new to Birch Lake, we extend a warm and hearty welcome. We're glad you're here! In fact, we're so glad, we just made a new committee on your behalf. I would like to thank Linda Curtis, Pam VanHuffel, and Vickie Rogers for putting together our new Welcome Committee. If you or someone you know is new to the lake, please contact one of these ladies. Look in the Barker for more information.

On behalf of the Birch Lake community, I would like to offer our sincere condolences to Jean Habich and family. Don "Butch" Habich passed away on May 12th. Don was a lifelong Birch

Lake resident and will be greatly missed.

I also offer our condolences to the family of Elizabeth "Betty" O'Brien. Betty passed away May 17. Betty will also be greatly missed.

I want to thank everyone who came out on a wintry night to attend our annual spring dinner. We had a good turnout, and it was nice and cozy inside. It was great to catch up with neighbors after a long winter. Many thanks go to Deb Spratt for putting together the flyer, collecting the reservations, and making the name tags. Thanks also to Claudia and Dennis Phipps for helping at the registration table and to our roaming photographer, Bob Waddle. The Matterhorn did a great job, and I've heard lots of compliments on the food. It was a fun evening.

Thank you to Mike Lutz for agreeing to once again be our fleet captain. Our weekend sailing races are such an integral part of Birch Lake summers, both to the sailors and the spectators. They don't happen on their own, so we appreciate the time and effort Mike puts in to organize the races. The sailors are always looking for volunteers to help on the committee boat. So if you would like

2016 Birch Lake Calendar

June 4	Porter Twp. Cleanup Day, 8-Noon, American Waste, Mason St., Union
June 11	Comm/Vice Com Party
June 18	Spaghetti Dinner
June 25	Peoples' Regatta, 11 am, Lutz's
June 25	Teen Night at BLYC, 7:30 pm
July 2	Boat Parade, 2 pm, Bender's
July 2	Fireworks
July 3	Fireworks rain date
July 3	Pancake Breakfast
July 22	BL Ladies' Golf Outing
July 29	Men's Golf Outing
Aug. 6	Corn & Sausage Roast)
Aug. 27	BLYC Fall Dinner (at the Yacht Club)

BLYC Board Meetings (9 am)
June 4, July 9, Au. 6, Sept. 10 @ BLYC

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

to help, contact either Mike or Patty Luecht. I hear no experience is necessary!

Vice Commodore Claudia and I would like to invite all of you to the Yacht Club on Saturday, June 11th @ 6:30 pm for the Commodore/Vice Commodore party. Please bring either an appetizer or dessert to share. We

— Birch Lake Notes —



Thanks to our Artist-in-Residence, Duffy Dufour for the great sailing art ...

determined that the sports and games field at Camp T (field next to the tennis courts) would be our best location.

Unfortunately, everyone on the north side, cove, northeast and northwest corners of the lake will need to go onto the lake in their boats to view the fireworks. I wanted to give you plenty of notice so that you could plan accordingly. My thoughts are that this is the best option at this time, and we can always reevaluate after the show.

Hope you can get out there and enjoy the lake this weekend, but please be safe! Let's watch out for each other so we can all enjoy our common backyard!

~Commodore Sue

Water Quality data is online

The latest water quality data from the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Project is available online at <http://www.philvitale.com/Barker/BirchBarker.htm> ... just click the link at the bottom of the page to see the complete report.

hope to see you all there!

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT:

This summer will bring some big changes to our annual fireworks show. Last fall we found out that due to changing insurance requirements mandating fireworks companies to be in compliance with fire codes, we will no longer be able to shoot off fireworks from the waterfront at Camp Tannadoonah. We got

right to work and several options were explored. We thoroughly looked into shooting from a barge, and found that is not a viable option for us at this time. We even looked into having a laser show instead of fireworks, but that was not viable either. To make a long story short, finding an alternative location was our best option. Together with the fireworks company and the fire chief, we

BLYC Boat Parade

We've all seen Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Rose Bowl Parade, but none can compare to the Annual Birch Lake Boat Parade, held right here on beautiful Birch Lake. After much deliberation, the Boat Parade Committee has chosen the theme for the 2016 event. This year's theme will be "Favorite Recording Artist (or group)."

Simply STUNNING

Have you seen the stunning new stamped-concrete compass rose at the Birch Lake Yacht Club?

This is just one example of the custom concrete services and products available to our friends and neighbors here at Birch Lake.

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— Birch Lake Notes —

From Jimmy Buffett to Blake Shelton, from the Beatles to ZZ Top, from Beyoncé to Prince or from Kiss to U2, the selection is endless. We could even throw in a little Lawrence Welk.

The parade will begin at 2 pm on July 2 at Dick Bender's pier on the south side. The parade will be led by this year's Grand Marshalls who's identity will be revealed in the July 2 Birch Barker. Let's get started planning right away because time is fleeting and we want to make this year's parade the best ever.

Pancake Breakfast

Come join us on Sunday, July 3 for the annual Pancake Breakfast at Camp Tannadoonah. From 8:30 am to 11 am, we'll be dishing up all-you-can-eat pancakes (a limited supply of gluten-free pancakes will be available), sausages, fruit, coffee and juice!

Cost for breakfast is \$5 for adults, kids age 6-10 are \$2 (kids age 5 and under are free).

Last year's proceeds from the breakfast were used to buy materials to build new bunks in the cabins at Camp Tannadoonah.

Come and have breakfast and show your support for all the great kids who attend Camp!

Online content

The printed Birch Barker will be

online this season, as well as additional content ... go to www.philvitale.com and follow the links.

BLYC Welcoming Committee

Linda Curtis, Pam Vanhuffel and Vicky Rogers are forming a Welcoming Committee for new families on the lake. More info later.

Fourth of July fireworks change

Due to changes in safety regulations and insurance, the Fourth of July fireworks can no longer be fired from the waterfront at Camp Tannadoonah. After a "test" fire last fall we have determined that the best available option is to fire from the camp's sports field next to the tennis and basketball court. Unfortunately this change will mean that people viewing from the homes in the Cove, north shore, and the north side of both the east and west shores of Birch Lake won't be able to see a good portion of the show unless they find a spot on the south side or go onto the lake in a boat to watch the show.

We're sorry for the inconvenience.

~Commodore Sue

Alpha Graphics is new printer

Thanks to new Birch Lake resident Pat Welch (south side), owner of Alpha Graphics in South Bend and Elkhart. Alpha Graphics is the new printer of the Birch Barker this year, replacing Office

Max (which merged with Office Depot last year and closed the store where the Barker was previously printed). We look forward to a great relationship!

Printed Birch Barker

Welcome to the first printed Birch Barker of the year. The Birch Barker is a service of the Birch Lake Yacht Club and provided free of charge every weekend to all the homes on Birch Lake, thanks to our generous advertisers.

The Barker welcomes the submission of materials for publication at the discretion of the editor, Phil Vitale (476-1680, email: sailorphil@philvitale.com).

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 June 4 issue is 3 pm on Tuesday, May 31) ... thanks.

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

Free Fishing Weekend

Don't miss your chance to explore our state's world-class fisheries – for FREE! Come on out as part of the 2016 Summer Free Fishing Weekend: Saturday, June 11 and Sunday, June 12.



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Frankie's Restaurant in Three Rivers has new owners. Over the past few months we have been working very hard to return the quality of the food and the quality of the dining experience to the levels that so many of us fondly remember from years ago. We hope you'll stop by and learn what we mean when we say that we're "Back on Track!"

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Daily food & drink specials

follow us on Facebook at [frankiesbythetracks](https://www.facebook.com/frankiesbythetracks)

— Birch Lake Notes —

As part of this weekend, all fishing license fees are waived for two days with residents and out-of-state visitors allowed to enjoy fishing on both inland and Great Lakes' waters for all species of fish during their respective open seasons. Please note all other regulations

still apply during that time.

Riparian Magazine

The Michigan Riparian Foundation and its publication, the Michigan Riparian Magazine, provide information on Michigan's shoreline, lakes, and

streams and on issues, events and programs dealing with the management and wise use of Michigan waters.

The Riparian Magazine is available to BLYC members at a reduced rate. For information or to subscribe check out <http://mi-riparian.org/subscribe/>

LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN

3rd Annual Don Harman People's Regatta

**SAILING FOR ALL AGES; NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
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**You may join the crew with an EXPERIENCED SAILOR
Launching from Lutz's on North Shore (next to Camp T.)**

JUNE 25, 2016

Arrival Time: 10:30 am; Sailing/Race Time: 11 am

Picnic lunch (hotdogs, chips) following; soft drinks and H2O provided

Adults: BYOB

**Please provide your own life jackets and towels
(next rain date TBA)**

More Information? Call Amy at 476-2843 or Bad Patty 476-2615

SEE YOU ON THE WATER

My personal thanks

As many of you know I haven't exactly been firing on all cylinders for the past few weeks. I just wanted to say a big thank you to all the people who have visited, called, inquired, prayed, left flowers, sent cards, and otherwise directed their positive thoughts and efforts to helping me get back onto my feet. It's not easy or fun, but your positive "ju-ju" means a lot to me. This is the most wonderful place I have ever had the good fortune to live, and you are the most wonderful neighbors a human could wish for. Thanks.

~sailorphil

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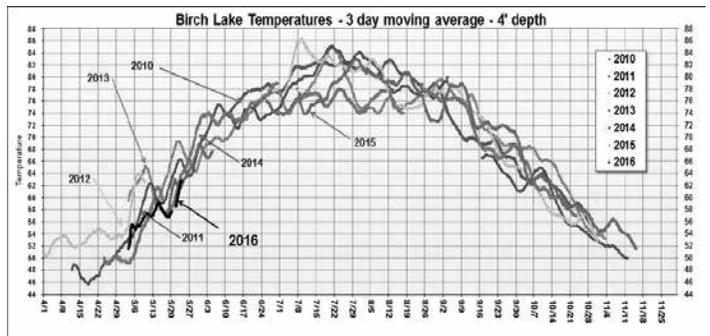
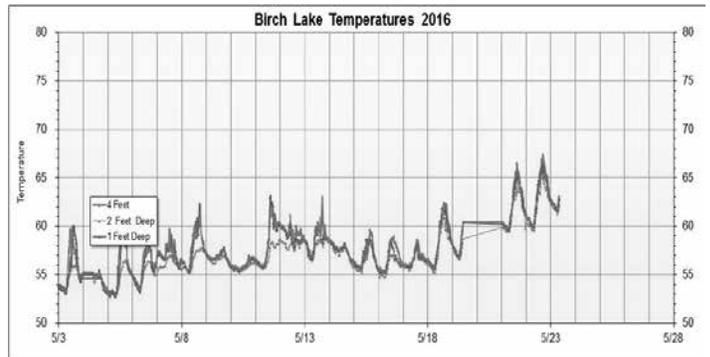
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— Birch Lake Notes —

BLYC PRESENTS TEEN NIGHT

This is an opportunity for our teens on Birch Lake to meet and greet other teens, ages 13-17. It will be a chaperoned event, and will include refreshments, games, and music.

Date: June 25, 2016

Time 7:30 -11 pm

Place: BLYC

For more information

email Keith Kinzler @

keithkinzler@gmail.com

or call (815) 6932975

SAVE THE DATE; Birch Lake Ladies' FUN Golf Outing

**Friday, July 22; \$35 per Golfer
Diamond Lake Golf Course
Tee Off Time 9 am**

Cost includes green fees, cart, beverages, and more FUN and GAMES than money can buy! 50/50 raffles, Team Prizes.

Lunch following at the BLYC (included in cost)

Each team is encouraged to donate a basket to raffle.

**Deadline to sign up is July 22
Get Your Teams Together!**

Team Members

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

**For more Information Watch the Birch Barker
Bad Patty Luecht 476-2615**

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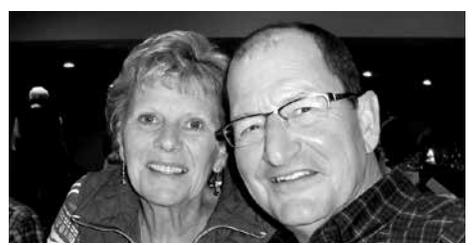
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¹ The number of sold lake homes is up 22% from 4/1/15 to 3/31/16 compared to 4/1/14 to 3/31/15. ² Based on data from the Southwestern Michigan Association of Realtors, Sales of Inland Lake Homes and Properties, from 1/1/12 to 4/1/16 in Berrien, Cass and St. Joseph Counties. Sales of properties where agents represent both the buyer and seller are given 200% credit by the MLS.

BLYC Spring Dinner



Photos courtesy of the
SparkyCam

— Water Quality Report —

State of the Lake, Spring 2016

We all tend to be optimistic and positive when thinking of our lake and its water quality.

However, analysis of some recent trends give us cause for concern.

We participate in what is called the Cooperative Lakes Management Program (CLMP) through the Michigan Lakes and Streams Association (MLSA), conducted in concert with the DEQ, Michigan State University, Great Lakes Water Resources, and other organizations. Water testing is designed to evaluate key parameters involved in measuring the trophic status or aging of a lake.

The three tests most commonly associated with measuring trophic status are **phosphorus** (key nutrient), **chlorophyll** (measure of productivity or use of nutrients), and **Secchi disk** readings (water clarity.) A fourth, which we also measure, is the amount of **dissolved oxygen** from top to bottom of the water column. (Additionally, last year we participated in the exotic plant watch, and this year will be adding what is called Score the Shore.)

Trophic status as mentioned, is basically another way of defining productivity or aging of a lake. A higher trophic status number means more plants, more algae, potentially more and different types of fish, and sediment accumulation from the death and decay of this increasing abundance of plant and animal material. Over time, a body of water loses clarity, becomes choked with plants, has abundant algae blooms and fills in with sediment until all we have is a wetland. This process of increasing biomass and aging is called eutrophication, exists in virtually all inland lakes, and is normally a slow process in the absence of additional influences. Unfortunately, since we like lakes, we bring lots of bad habits to the lakes we love, and thus we now have accelerated cultural eutrophication.

TSI is short for Trophic Status Index. There can be a TSI or Trophic Status Index for each parameter and a summary calculated total TSI which takes into account all the three most common parameters, i.e. water clarity, phosphorus, and chlorophyll.

In the 2015 CLMP report, which you can look at online by going to my.mlsa.org and clicking on the CLMP section and looking at individual lake reports, we find a few disturbing trends.

(Editor's Note: You can see the CLMP Report for Birch Lake by visiting <http://www.philvitale.com/Barker/BirchBarker.htm> and clicking on the link at the bottom of the page).

Individual years are not very useful, but there is a summary section in which we can see the 2015 TSI and compare it to a 5 year composite of TSIs from 2010 to 2014, and another composite from 2002 to 2009. Grouping years together

is more powerful than an isolated year. Thus, we see a trend of increasing TSIs from 34 (2002-2009) to 36 (2010-2014), to a 39 for 2015. The last is for a single year and in itself not real informative but still trending up at an apparently increasing rate.

For your reference, lakes typically considered to be:

1. the most desirable (oligotrophic) have TSI numbers of <30 up to 40.
2. the second most desirable (mesotrophic) have TSI numbers from 40 - 50.
3. in the two least desirable classes (eutrophic and hyper eutrophic) have TSI numbers of 50 - 70 and 70 - 100+, respectively.

How bad is all this? Too early to tell. We need further data to see if this accelerated eutrophication is real or an anomaly. However, we need to treat it as real rather than wait and hope. This brings up the question, "well, what can we do?" Since this is all about addition of nutrients, that has to be what we look to change. Ours is a phosphorus sensitive lake, meaning that other nutrients are present in sufficient abundance, but phosphorus is the limiting nutrient. More phosphorus means more productivity, i.e. more plants and algae and less clarity etc. Conversely, less phosphorus yields less productivity. Nutrient addition to the lake can occur by a number of means. We do not have septic tanks and dry wells anymore but there can still be some phosphorus leaching into the lake from the abandoned systems, but this will be limited. Quite a bit actually comes from the air from soil particles that are part of the general dust raised from farms and fields. (Do you know that the Amazon receives most of its phosphorus from the Sahara desert through storms and air currents?)

The only external phosphorus source that we can truly control is that which runs off from adjacent surfaces. Please remember the slogan that what is around the lake and in our watershed is very likely to get into the lake. If you must fertilize, minimize the quantity, keep it away from the shore, and use fertilizer with no phosphorus and try to limit it to only once a year. **(This means no Tru Green or Scotts "programs.")** Excess nitrogen will also green up a lake if there is sufficient phosphorus. Pick up animal waste. Do not burn and leave ashes around to blow or wash into the lake (instant fertilizer). Highly important is trying to stop or impede runoff taking what is around the lake into the lake. This work best when natural shoreline development is used in place of seawalls.

We will have more on shoreline development as the season progresses, but basically suffice it to say there are only a few decent examples of natural



lake lawn interface on our lake. The rest are what we are finding to be detrimental and not healthy to the lake. We love tidy and brought that concept to the lake in the form of sea walls and a green lawn up to the water's edge. It is probably time to consider some changes that can be made that could be of benefit and still provide an attractive shoreline. Shoreline development has become a major point of emphasis within the DEQ and many other agencies and organizations.

PLEASE NOTE there will be two nearby workshops for inland lake property owners regarding naturally protecting your shoreline, that will be held either June 4 at Camp Friedenswald or June 9 at the Berrien County Sarett Nature Center. These are to be hosted by the Michigan State University Extension service and will be 4 hours in length with a light meal and a tour. Terry Dugan is going to the June 9 program. Preregistration is required at <http://events.anr.msu.edu/swnaturalshore16/> and a cost of \$50. Terry is planning on trying to do some retro conversion of his frontage. This is something he has been thinking about and hopefully will be considered as sort of a demonstration project. Attractiveness, runoff control, and erosion prevention are all goals.

So what is the State of the Lake? It is okay, could be better (clarity the last few years has been bad in the summer), and our lake is experiencing some concerning trends, but it could be much worse. At both the recent statewide MLSA convention and the local southwest regional meeting, representatives of the attending lakes talk about their issues and what they are doing about them. We learned that while Birch Lake has marl (precipitate calcium carbonate) that forms the soft squishy bottom in a number of places, some other lakes have excess muck, the decaying remnants of the lakes' productivity, that can be a number of feet deep. Scores of Michigan lakes have set up aeration systems with addition of bacteria to further digest the muck costing thousands of dollars and lots of time and effort. So, as we sit and listen to a litany of the woes of others, we realize that others have it worse and that we would like to avoid following them.

FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Sorry, no races this weekend

I hate to say it but I just don't see enough boats in the water yet to have a legitimate Regatta over the Memorial Day weekend. If the weather cooperates and some of the more "hardcore" sailors want to go out and make the rounds, I suggest a "beercan regatta" might happen.

We'll plan to begin our regular season next weekend (weather permitting). Watch for the marks to go out and for the committee boat to create the starting line ... and speaking of committee boat, Bad Patty is looking for help EVERY WEEKEND this summer. No experience necessary; will provide on-the-job training.

Bring your own beer!

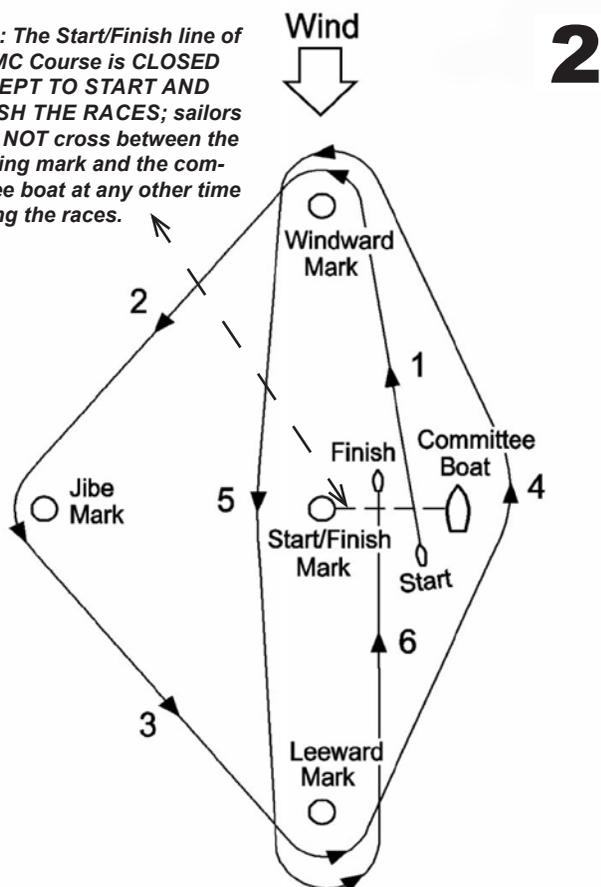
See you out there next weekend hopefully, meanwhile, "Slice the main brace!"
~"Fleet Captain Mike"



BLYC sailing courses for MC and Sunfish

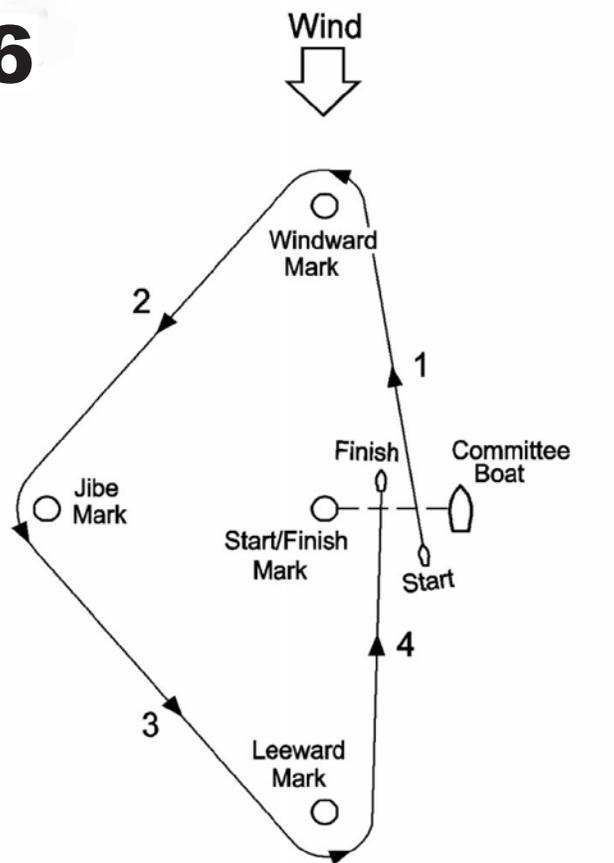
Note: The Start/Finish line of the MC Course is CLOSED EXCEPT TO START AND FINISH THE RACES; sailors MAY NOT cross between the starting mark and the committee boat at any other time during the races.

2016



MC Course

Marks to Port (Mirror Image for Marks to Starboard)
Legs 4 and 5 cannot cross the start/finish line, but they can go around either end of the line.



Sunfish Course

Marks to Port (Mirror Image for Marks to Starboard)

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south side of Eagle Lake, Edwardsburg, MI

— Barker Sailing Page —



America's Cup Update

The America's Cup next sails in 2017 on adopted Defender home Bermuda. Until then the teams are racing One Design (OD) regattas around the world to allow fans to experience the space age hard winged foiling catamarans.

The Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series Chicago regatta is on June 10-12. This is the first ever AC event on fresh water. For more go to: AmericasCup.com



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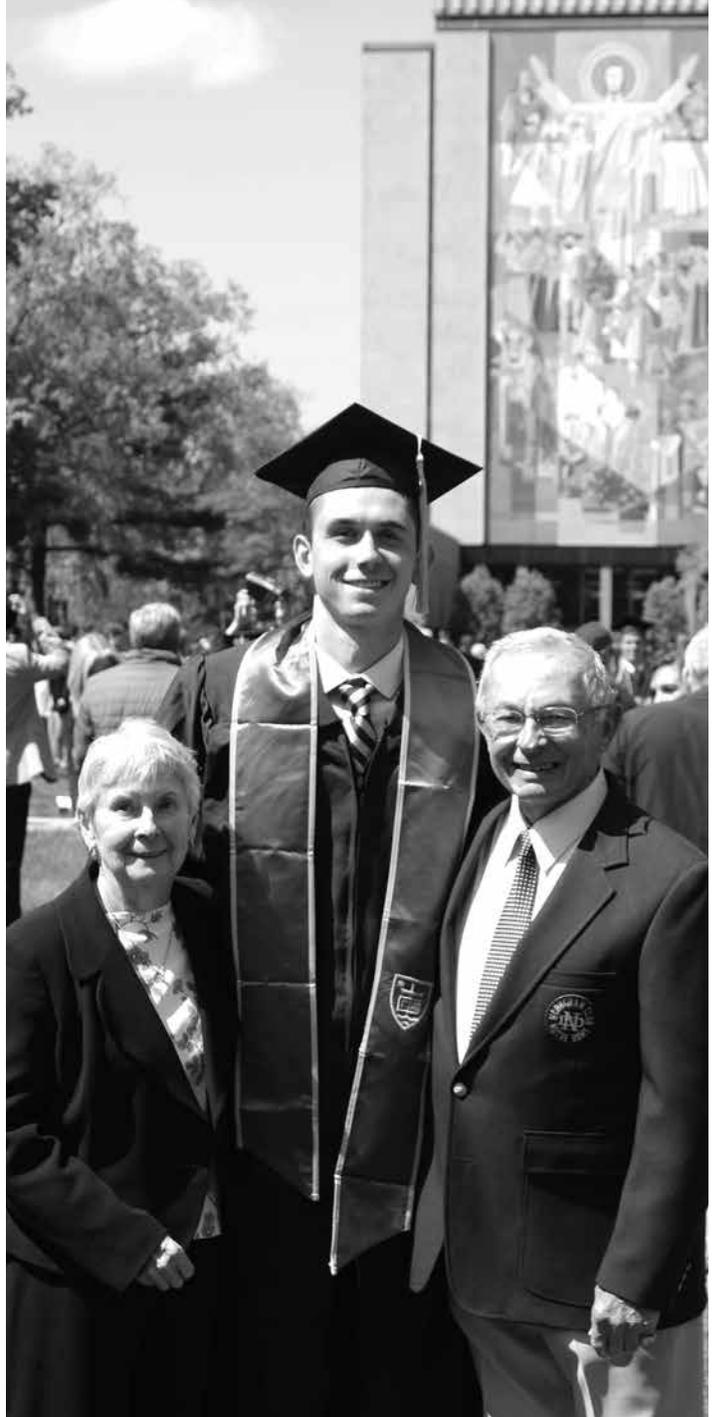
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— Barker Kids of the Week —



Ok, I had some space to fill so I threw in this pic of my east-side neighbor Bill Luecht (right) and yours truly mugging for the camera at some bar in Marcellus.



Congratulations to Spencer Rheinhardt (grandson of Bud and Barbara Zesinger, east side), who graduated from the University of Notre Dame on Sunday, May 15. Spencer will be returning to Notre Dame in the Fall to complete a Masters of Science in Accountancy.

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— Barker Kids of the Week —



Yep, that's my neighbor Bill Luecht (East side) posing in one of the newly embroidered aprons (thanks Bad Patty) that we'll be using at the Pancake Breakfast on July 3 at Camp Tannadoonah.



That's northsiders Rick & Patti Russwurm relaxing for a beer on Rick's birthday recently after a sailing trip to the Bahamas. Rick turned 64 that day, we still don't know how old Patti is.

KID-OF-THE-WEEK PHOTOS

Send your kid of the week to Birch Barker, 63174 Birch Rd., Vandalia, MI 49095; put them in a ziplock and stick them in my stone mailbox at my home (east side), email at SAILORPHIL@PHILVITALE.COM



Birch Lake (Cove) Home 62746 Woodland Drive

Newly remodeled 3 BR home on Birch Lake! New gas furnace and central air with all new duct work. New well and all new windows. New Nantucket bead board kitchen cabinets and all new appliances including a main level laundry area. Bath has all new fixtures. Open concept living and dining area with brick fireplace and skylight. Loft with bedroom, enclosed front porch and deck. All new flooring and newly insulated walls and drywall. Move in ready! \$289,900



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STU'S STAR STUFF



Mars in opposition - you can't miss it!

This week Mars comes to opposition in our sky for the first time in over two years. And it's the brightest that Mars has appeared in our sky in over 10 years. Mars is now very nearly the same brightness as Jupiter, which has been the brightest starlike object up there each evening for some weeks.

You can't miss it! Even the drenching moonlight of the waning gibbous moon, just past full today and near Mars in the sky, won't be able to wash the Red Planet from the nighttime sky.

Mars now resides opposite the sun in Earth's sky, because on this date we are passing between it and the sun in our smaller, faster orbit.

Now opposite the sun, Mars rises in the east around sunset, climbs to its highest point in the sky at midnight, and sets in the west around sunrise.

Mars alternates between good and bad years for viewing in our sky, and 2016 counts as a very good year because it is an opposition year. In the alternate years, Mars stays on the far side of the sun from Earth and is relatively faint and inconspicuous in our sky.

Oppositions of Mars are not created equal, though, and, in 2016, Mars is closer to Earth than in over 10 years, or since the opposition of November 7, 2005.

Super-close oppositions of Mars recur in periods of 15 to 17 years. The last super-close Martian opposition happened on August 28, 2003, and the next one will occur on July 27, 2018. Extra-close oppositions happen when we go between Mars and the sun around the time Mars is closest to the sun. Makes sense, right?

This year's opposition doesn't bring Mars as close as it can be. But it's a good opposition, and Mars is very

bright in our sky. But don't be fooled by the yearly urban legend that Mars will appear in the sky as big as a full moon. Even if you did read it on the Internet.

At present, Mars ranks as the fifth-brightest celestial object to light up the heavens after the sun, moon, Venus and Jupiter. However, Venus is now lost in the glare of the sun, so Mars can rightfully claim the mantle of the fourth-brightest heavenly body in the nighttime sky.

This month showcases Mars at its moment of glory. What's more, you can use brilliant Mars as your guide star to the planet Saturn and the star Antares, the brightest star in the constellation Scorpius, for months to come. In fact, Mars and Saturn will be having a conjunction on August 25, to stage their first conjunction since 2014. I can't wait. You're all invited.

By the way, you can distinguish Saturn from Antares by color. Saturn exhibits a golden hue whereas Antares, the heart of Scorpius, appears reddish. Although both Saturn and Antares shine at 1st-magnitude brightness, neither Saturn nor Antares holds as candle to Mars right now.

Look for Mars, Saturn and Antares in the southern sky anytime after sunset.

And as always ... I don't need to tell you.

~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: 0.519
0.2 days before last quarter



Sunrise: 6:12
Sunset: 21:10
Moonrise: 2:13
Moonset: 13:40
Last Qtr: 8:13
Day length: 14h 57m

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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 under the "resources" tab

ATTENTION

**YOUR DOG DID HIS DUTY
PLEASE DO YOURS**



**CLEAN UP AFTER
YOUR PET**

Definitions of commonly used tools

SKIL SAW: A portable cutting tool used to make boards too short.

BELT SANDER: An electric sanding tool commonly used to convert minor touch-up jobs into major refinishing jobs.

WIRE WHEEL: Cleans paint off bolts and then throws them somewhere under the workbench with the speed of light. Also removes fingerprints and hard-earned calluses from fingers in about the time it takes you to say, "Oh s---." Will easily wind a tee shirt off your back.

DRILL PRESS: A tall upright machine useful for suddenly snatching flat metal bar stock out of your hands so that it smacks you in the chest and flings your beer across the room, denting the freshly-painted project which you had carefully set in the corner where nothing could get to it.

CHANNEL LOCKS: Used to round off bolt heads. Sometimes used in the creation of blood-blisters.

HACKSAW: One of a family of cutting tools built on the Ouija board principle. It transforms human energy into a crooked, unpredictable motion, and the more you attempt to influence its course, the more dismal your future becomes.

WISE-GRIPS: Generally used after pliers to completely round off bolt heads. If nothing else is available, they can also be used to transfer intense welding heat to

the palm of your hand.

OXYACETYLENE TORCH: Used almost entirely for igniting various flammable objects in your shop and creating a fire. Also handy for igniting the grease inside the wheel hub out of which you want to remove a bearing race.

TABLE SAW : A large stationary power tool commonly used to launch wood projectiles for testing wall integrity. Very effective for digit removal!!

HYDRAULIC FLOOR JACK : Used for lowering an automobile to the ground after you have installed your new brake shoes, trapping the jack handle firmly under the bumper.

BAND SAW : A large stationary power saw primarily used by most shops to cut large pieces into smaller pieces that more easily fit into the trash after you cut on the inside of the line instead of the outside edge. Also excels at amputations.

TWO-TON ENGINE HOIST : A tool for testing the maximum tensile strength of all the crap you forgot to disconnect.

PHILLIPS SCREWDRIVER : Normally used to stab the vacuum seals under lids or for opening old-style paper-and-tin oil cans and splashing oil on your shirt; but can also be used, as the name implies, to strip out Phillips screw heads.

STRAIGHT SCREWDRIVER : A tool

for opening paint cans. Sometimes used to convert common slotted screws into non-removable screws and butchering your palms.

PRY BAR: A tool used to crumple the metal surrounding that clip or bracket you needed to remove in order to replace a 50-cent part.

PVC PIPE CUTTER: A tool used to make plastic pipe too short.

HAMMER: Originally employed as a weapon of war, the hammer nowadays is used as a kind of divining rod to locate the most expensive parts adjacent to the object you are trying to hit. Also very effective at fingernail removal.

UTILITY KNIFE: Used to open and slice through the contents of cardboard cartons delivered to your front door. Works particularly well on contents such as seats, vinyl records, liquids in plastic bottles, collector magazines, refund checks, and rubber or plastic parts. Especially useful for slicing work clothes, but only while in use. These can also be used to initiate a trip to the emergency room so a doctor can sew up the damage.

#%\$@! TOOL: Any handy tool that you grab and throw across the garage while yelling "#%\$@!" at the top of your lungs. It is also, most often, the next tool that you will need.

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YOUR HOROSCOPE

Aries (March 21-April 19) The next four weeks will sweep you off your feet! Your daily pace will accelerate with a jam-packed schedule of short trips, errands, visits to siblings and relatives plus increased time spent writing, studying and reading. Now is the time to look at casual relationships that are actually important to you.

Taurus (April 20-May 20) Money, money, money! You're good with money! In the next four to five weeks, you will ponder your values in life, especially in terms of money and movable property. Take a realistic look at how you handle your possessions. Do you own them or do they own you? Learn how to use what you own to establish greater control of your world.

Gemini (May 21-June 20) It's totally okay to put yourself first without any qualms because yes, the month ahead is all about you! And if you don't take care of yourself, you will be of no use to anyone. Because you will project yourself on to others with more force and enthusiasm, you will make a positive impression on everyone!

Cancer (June 21-July 22) For the next four weeks, You will seek ways to hide. You might choose to work alone or behind the scenes. You might shun invitations to busy affairs not because you're being antisocial but because you prefer to withdraw from the hubbub going on around you. This is totally appropriate. In addition, because your birthday is a month away, you will benefit by setting some goals with deadlines because that is the most effective way to achieve your hopes and dreams. I

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) Your popularity rating will soar in the next four weeks because the Sun will energize the part of your chart relating to friendships, casual relationships and anything to do with clubs, groups, classes and organizations. This window of time will be ideal to work with and cooperate with other people.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) For the next four weeks, you will be high viz., especially in the eyes of authority figures like bosses, parents, teachers, VIPs and the police. Fortunately, the light that shines on you will be flattering, which means they will see you in a favorable way. (Thank heavens!) Obviously, you can use this to your advantage. Put your best foot forward and ask for what you want because you will probably get it.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Do whatever you can to broaden your horizons and your experience of the world. The obvious choice would be travel. Break free of your daily routine and give yourself a change of scenery! Talk to people from different backgrounds. Learn something new and be open to adventure.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) You're looking at an intense four weeks. You will take things more seriously because you want to experience life on a feeling level, not just an intellectual understanding. Not only will you have an increased focus on psychological self inquiry, you will have a greater focus on shared property, inheritances, finances and anything jointly held. You might also attract someone powerful to you who makes you question things.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) During the next four to five weeks, you will feel more tired. Obviously, more sleep is the answer. (But what was the question?) You will question which relationships do or do not fulfill your needs. Remember: For a successful relationship, you must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) You are a hard-working sign because your philosophy is, "No pain, no gain." In the month ahead, you will strive to work as efficiently and effectively as you can because you want top production! More specifically, you want the most bang for your buck when it comes to putting out your effort.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) Beginning this week, you are entering a 4-5 week window of time that might be the most playful time of the year for you! You want to get out and have a good time. You will feel lighthearted, playful and flirtatious. Sports events, social excursions and fun times with children will please you. Needless to say, this is an excellent time to slip away on a vacation. You will also enjoy the arts - plays, musical performances, the theatre etc.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20) Your focus will now turn to home, family and your private world during the next four weeks. For starters, you will want to hang out at home more than usual. You want to feel thumb-sucking cozy among familiar surroundings. Family reunions and family plans will be important. But this will also be a time where you will do some psychological self evaluation.

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Dog Week at the Funnies!

Thanks to Dr. Dan Waxman (east side) for this week's

Barker Funnies!



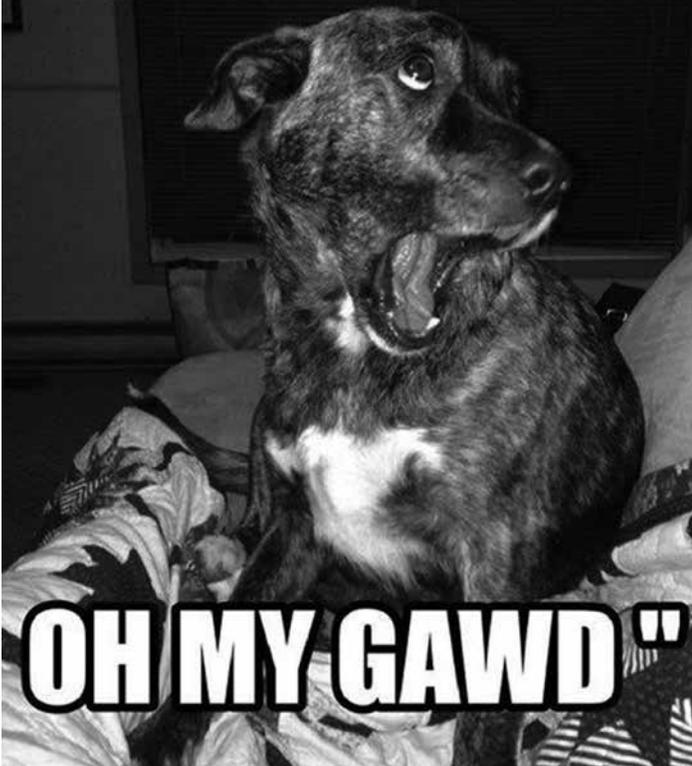
**WELL, IT'S NOT
GOING TO
THROW ITSELF**

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN SO HAPPY?



YOU BECAME A PEACOCK?

" AND I WAS LIKE



OH MY GAWD "



**LOOK DEEPLY INTO MY EYES..
YOU FEEL COMPELLED TO BUY
ME A BONE**

Safe boating is no accident!

With the warmer weather, Michigan residents and visitors are gearing up for summer recreation in the out-of-doors, including the popular pastime of boating. Tomorrow marks the beginning of National Safe Boating Week, held May 21-27, an effort to remind people to follow some boating safety tips.

Department of Natural Resources conservation officers encourage Michigan residents and visitors to:

Wear a life jacket. More than 80 percent of drowning accidents in the United States are due to people not wearing their life jackets. In Michigan, anyone under the age of 6 must wear a life jacket when on the open deck of any vessel, but wearing a personal flotation device is recommended for everyone.

Avoid drinking alcohol. Nearly half of all boating accidents involve alcohol. Studies show that passengers are 10 times more likely to fall overboard when they have consumed alcohol.

Make sure the boat is properly equipped and equipment is in good work-

ing order. In addition to all legally required equipment, such as life jackets and fire extinguishers, always carry a first-aid kit, nautical charts and an anchor. Make sure navigation lights are working properly.

File a float plan. Always let a family member or friend on shore know the "who, what, when and where" of your trip. Let them know when you are expected to be back. Give them phone numbers for the local emergency dispatch center and U.S. Coast Guard in the event you don't return when expected. Maintain a sharp lookout. Stay alert for other boats, swimmers, skiers and objects in the water. This is especially true when operating in crowded waterways, at night and during conditions of restricted visibility.

Carry a marine radio or cell phone. Be prepared to call for help in case you are involved in an accident, your boat becomes disabled or you otherwise need assistance. Program the phone numbers for the local emergency dispatch center and U.S. Coast

Guard in your cell phone. Make sure your cell phone is fully charged, but be aware that there are often gaps in coverage on the water.

We also recommend a boating safety course for anyone who plans on taking to the water in a boat or on a personal watercraft," said Sgt. Al Bavarskas, marine specialist with the DNR Law Enforcement Division's recreational safety and education programs. "Boating safety

classes are offered at different locations around the state and online, making it convenient and affordable."

For more information on boating safety, including who is required to take a boating safety class, go to www.michigan.gov/boating.

For more information on safe boating, visit the U.S. Coast Guard's Boating Safety Resource Center at www.uscgboating.org.

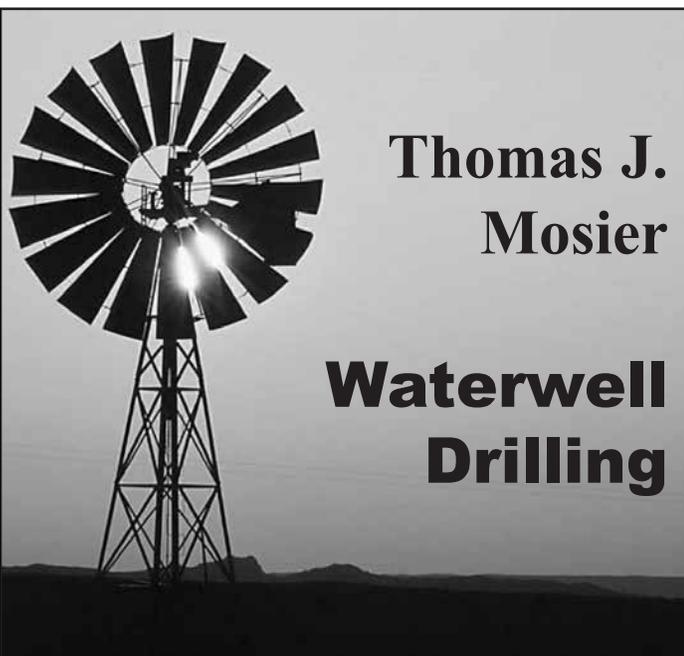


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~Birch Lake Recipes~



Provided Exclusively to the Birch Barker from Mrs. Ima Foodnudge

No-Bake Energy Bites

This is a healthy take on the traditional no bake cookies. So good and good for you! I am asked for this recipe every time I make them. They are a hit with the kids and the adults, and always go quick! I store them in the freezer because I think they taste best frozen, but not necessary. 24 servings @ 94 cal/per

Ingredients

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/2 cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup ground flax seed

- 1 cup chopped hazelnuts
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and refrigerate for 30 minutes. On cookie sheet lined with wax paper, roll into small balls. Place in the refrigerator at least 1 hour before serving. YUM!

Birch Barker Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 through to 9. There is only one solution to the puzzle.

	2	5	9		4	7	8	
3	7	9		8				
			6					3
		3			1			9
				2	5			
		8		4			6	7
	1	4	8					
	3	6			2	4		

— Camp Tannadoonah —

Here we are again, at the start of another summer! It's looking like it's going to be a great year at camp. We currently have (as of May 24) 754 campers registered for camp! Last year was a record summer for us, with a grand total of 847 campers, but on this same date last year we had 724 registered campers. So we're about 30 ahead of that number for this year, with about three weeks until the first group of campers arrive for the summer.

We've been getting a lot of projects done around camp in the past few months, and can't wait for you all to see how nice things are looking! This winter and spring, we had a wonderful group of volunteers who built new beds for the "Birds" cabins (Robins, Woodpeckers, Cardinals, and Wrens). We have now replaced all of the old metal framed beds in those cabins with beautiful new wooden beds!

This project was funded by a generous donation from the Birch Lake Yacht Club, with funds raised from last summer's pancake breakfast. And the beds were built by five awesome volunteers: Tony Laskowski, Tom Rogers, Phil Vitale, PJ Vandewalle, and Tom Kuhn. We're very grateful for all of their hard work on this project! We know the campers in those cabins are going to love the new beds.

This spring we hired a new facilities



manager, Ranger Bob. He's been working on a new sidewalk along the dining hall to fix drainage issues and make the building wheelchair accessible, new back exits in the adventure cabins to meet new fire code rules, and lots of big and little projects to get camp looking perfect for when campers arrive for the summer.

The biggest project that we've been working on is a major renovation to our Nurse's cabin. We received a grant from the Home Depot Foundation, which covered nearly all of the materials costs for this project. Not only that, but they provided a team of workers to help us get everything done! We had three days of Team Depot volunteers at camp, plus two of their volunteers came back to camp on two more days to help us finish everything up. They were amazing!

The project included all new windows, trim, counter tops, sinks, cabinets, flooring, lighting, refrigerator and ice

machine, a patio outside, and fresh paint on every wall, ceiling, and door! It hardly looks like the same building now that it's done. I know that our nurses are going to be thrilled when they see it! It's so exciting to see these projects being completed. Camp is looking great – if you haven't been up there lately, take a walk through and check out all the changes. You'll probably run into Ranger Bob if you come up during the week so stop and say hello!

Just like last year, we have a number of international staff this year, and I'm working on arranging rides for them the bus stop near the ND bookstore. If you would be interested in helping pick up a counselor at the airport, please let me know! I have people arriving on Monday, May 30, Wednesday, June 1, and Saturday, June 4.

Hope you all enjoy the Memorial Day weekend!

~Miss Amber

Amber@tannadoonah.org

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For Sale: **Samsung Galaxy Centura TracFone**. \$25. 476-1680 or email sailorphil@philvital.com

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Please call or text Linda Witchie, 269-240-4004, if you are interested in any of these items.

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Wanted: **Boat Lift**, 4,500 to 5,000 lbs., 120". Call Andy at (630) 806-5507

Wanted - **Yard maintenance person** for the summer. Contact Stewart at 476-2113

WANTED TO PURCHASE **Used pontoon boat in good condition**. Contact Tom DeCocker 476-9821.

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MISC.

Looking for a ride - Take your first step toward fame and fortune by allowing me to exercise your under-used Sunfish on Sunday mornings. I will promise to do my best to keep Rick from crashing into me, thus allowing me to finish high in the standings and giving you the credit, respect and adoration you so desperately crave. Contact Stewart at 476.2113

BARKER CLASSIFIEDS

Classified ads in the Birch Barker are free to members of the Birch Lake Yacht Club and \$5 per ad for non-members (please pay in advance). To submit an ad, email it to Sailorphil@philvital.com

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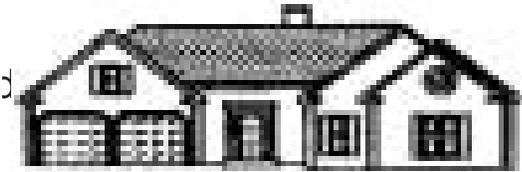
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Name _____

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Address _____

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\$___ - Milfoil/Loosestrife Eradication

\$___ - Safety Committee

\$___ - Other non-party related expenses

\$___ - BLYC Roof Fund

\$___ - Misc.

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