

Birch Barker

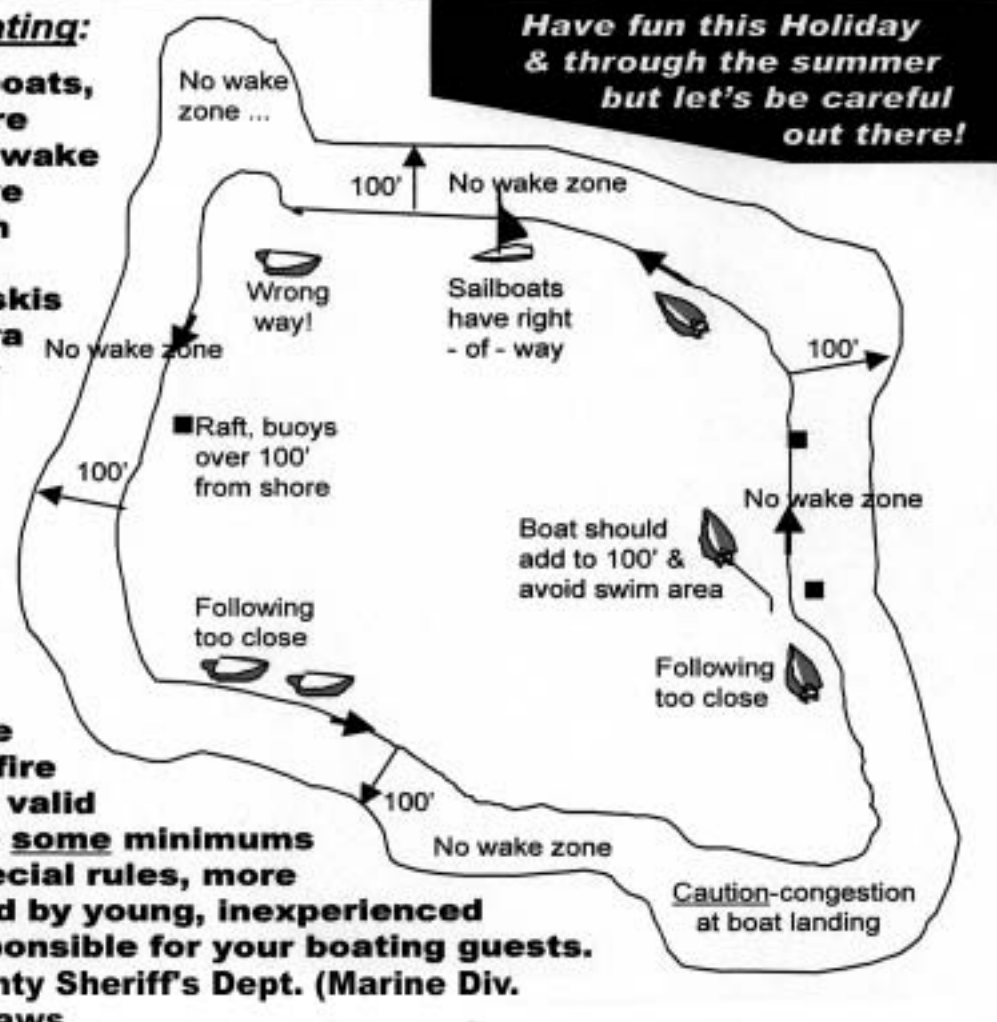
Weekend of June 2, 2007

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Have fun this Holiday & through the summer but let's be careful out there!

Common-Sense Boating:

- * **Go slow near other boats, rafts & shore. You are responsible for your wake**
- * **Take your time & give room - stay 100' from boats, rafts & shore**
- * **Pulling someone on skis or tube requires extra caution, an observer & add the length of your tow line to the 100' rule**
- * **Drive only in the counter-clock-wise direction (flow)**
- * **One wearable USCG life jacket must be available for each person on board! One throwable device, a fire extinguisher, horn & valid boat registration are some minimums**
- * **PWCs have many special rules, more caution must be used by young, inexperienced drivers. You are responsible for your boating guests.**
- * **Consult the Cass County Sheriff's Dept. (Marine Div. for Michigan boating laws**



The diagram illustrates a lake with a counter-clockwise flow. Key features include:

- No wake zone ...** at the top.
- 100'** distance markers from the shore and other boats.
- Wrong way!** and **Sailboats have right - of - way** indicating the correct direction of travel.
- No wake zone** around a **Raft, buoys over 100' from shore**.
- Following too close** warnings between boats.
- Boat should add to 100' & avoid swim area** near a swimmer.
- Caution-congestion at boat landing** at the bottom right.

Commodore's Comments

This past weekend was a welcome break. We had a little bit of everything: rain, thunder, humidity, sunshine and clear night skies. The rain certainly dampened our picnic idea but it was fun finding things to do inside. Scott and Holly Troeger had a group of teenagers who discovered all kinds of board games and had a great time playing with those. I know some of us even snuck in a nap or two. The rain didn't stop many of us from attending Camp Tannadoonah's Open House. Camp Director Amber Grundy and her husband, Chas, have really been working hard getting the camp ready. It looks fabulous. It is so exciting to see camp become a place that everyone can be proud of.

Once that sun broke through the clouds the lake sure became a busy place both on and off the water. Please check out the boating "rules of the road" map in this week's Barker. Two good rules of

thumb: all motorized boats need to travel in a counterclockwise direction and stay 100 feet from other traveling boats and floating objects. Don't forget that sailboats and other non-powered vessels have the right of way. You can get the entire Michigan Boating Handbook, in PDF format, at <http://www.boat-ed.com/mi/handbook/index.htm>

Sadly, The Memorial Day Regatta was sunk by the weather but weekly racing will start this Sunday. Anyone who is interested in giving it a try would be welcome. If you are interested in getting to know more about it before you join the actual competition please feel free to call Steve Richards or myself to hook you up with a veteran sailor. While not a sailor myself I really enjoy a helping on the Committee boat so please call one of us if you want to try that. It's on the job training but very easy to do.

There are a number of things being planned for this summer so check inside to get the latest dates to mark on your calendar. If you have an idea you'd like to

try please give me a call. Of course we are always looking for activities to do with our kids. Something simple like a scavenger hunt, relay races or bingo night.

Looking forward to our next event on June 9th, we have the beginning-of-the-year cocktail party. The fun will start at 7:30 pm. We will honor all of our past Commodores and then play a round of Birch Lake Jeopardy. Questions are being created as you read this. I played a different version this winter and we had such a good time. Teams were so competitive with each other, but even the losing teams talked about it for next week and said they had a good time. Please bring an appetizer or snack and dress nautically to salute our Commodores.

Nothing official is planned for this weekend at Birch Lake. Enjoy your weekend no matter what the weather is...

It's a beautiful day in the neighborhood!

-Blair Garceau, Commodore 2007

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.

— Birch Lake Notes —

Line Dancing is back

Line Dance, Tuesday mornings at 9 am. Everyone is welcome to join us at the Yacht Club.

Cass County Parks ...

There are over 20 Eagle Scout projects at Lawless Park.

The Cass County parks hosted nearly 90 reservations with approximately, 8,000 to 9,000 guests in 2006. Group reservations are up so far in 2007.

Lawless Park has over 10 miles of technical mountain biking trails and a mountain bike race has been held there each year for the last 12 years. It also has a tent site and a rustic group campground that can be reserved by any organized group and is complete with a pavilion, water, restrooms, a fire bowl and a cabin.

Unwritten rules of the water

Every parent knows that good manners involves more than saying "please" and "thank you."

When it comes to boating, manners is called "boating etiquette," a code of unwritten rules and behaviors that every boater should learn and know.

Other boaters on our lake are generally like our neighbors in town

— they are considerate of one another and follow similar "rules." Good boating manners make for better experiences on the lake.

Here are a few etiquette tips that can help make your day on the lake smoother and more enjoyable.

KNOW THE RULES

The best way to learn how to act on the water is to take a certified boating course. It will teach you safety procedures and how to operate and handle a boat. Plus, you can often get discounted boat insurance, not to mention keep your family and crew safer.

RESPECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Be kind to water, one of Earth's most precious resources. That means avoiding fuel spills and never dumping trash or garbage into the lake.

MINIMIZE NOISE POLLUTION

Respect other people's right to privacy and quiet. Dock away from other boaters if you have barking dogs or rowdy children on board, especially at night. Keep comments about fellow boaters to yourself (remember, sound carries a loong way over the water).

PLAY IT SAFE.

Always have and use the proper safety gear, including life jackets and communications equipment.

Tentative BLYC Calendar

June 9.....	Board Meeting 9 AM
June 9.....	Commodore's Party
June 14.....	Ladies Coffee 10 AM
June 23.....	Vice Commodore's Party
June 30.....	FIREWORKS
June 30.....	Boat Parade 4 PM
July 1.....	Pancake Breakfast
July 3.....	Fireworks & boat parade raindate
July 7.....	Board Meeting 9 AM
July 7.....	Homeowner's Assn Meeting 10 AM
July 21.....	Spaghetti Dinner
July 27.....	Men's Golf Outing
July 28.....	Garage Sale
Aug. 3.....	Women's Golf Outing & Luncheon
Aug. 4.....	Board Meeting 9 AM
Aug. 4.....	Corn and Sausage Roast
Aug. 11.....	House Walk
Aug. 18.....	Fall Dinner
Sept. 1.....	Board Meeting 9 AM
Sept. 3.....	Sailing Awards

MAKE SOLID DECISIONS

A good decision is a safe one. Don't race other boats or attack a boat if it cuts you off — boat rage can be as dangerous as road rage. That means making safety the goal. Remember, a safe decision includes not "drinking while driving" a boat.

BE A GOOD GUEST

Guests have certain responsibilities whether they are on board for the an hour or all day. Overall,



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

-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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He may be moldy but he ain't plastic!

*And he probably won't remember your name
until you've know him for years ... but, hey
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'Have A Safe and Fun Summer!'

— Birch Lake Notes —

guests need to be safe. So, it's best if the boat owner reviews safety procedures, any duties expected of them and the "rules" of the boat (no smoking, no running, no one allowed on the foredeck while the boat is moving, etc.). Guests should be told not to touch the gauges, buttons, radios or other instruments that operate the boat. Remind guests they should wait until the boat has docked to gather personal items or climb onto the pier.

ASSIST OTHER BOATERS

Any boater will appreciate help if he has broken down, run out of gas or has engine trouble. As a fellow boater, call for help or lend a helping hand. You'd want someone to do the same for you. If there is no dock master or helper on hand to assist those docking and undocking, you may also want to offer assistance to them.

Jet Skis

Next week we'll review the rules on operating a personal watercraft (PWC, or Jet Ski) on Michigan lakes.

Some of the key points of Michigan law include:

■ A person shall not operate a personal watercraft during the period that begins 1 hour before sunset and ends at 8 a.m.

Birch Barker Kids of the Week



A group of inspired-though-intrepid Birch Lake "kids" took a neighbor's boat lift for a walk around the lake recently and one of their spouses snapped this great photo of them walking it around the piers in chest-deep water. From left are spectator Gary Eschelman (whose boat is pointing the wrong way on the lake ... see chart on Page 1), an unidentified boat heading in the proper direction, Stan Pitakos, Mike Lutz, Steve Cranmer, Bernie Garceau, Art McElwee and Stu Spratt. According to witnesses the lift was safely relocated with minimal whining.

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— Birch Lake Notes —

■ A person operating a personal watercraft shall not cross within 150 feet behind another vessel, other than a personal watercraft, unless the personal watercraft is operating at a slow-no wake speed.

■ Unless operating in a navigable channel, canal, river or stream, a person who operates a personal watercraft or a person that is being towed by a personal watercraft **shall not operate within 100 feet of:**

— A dock or raft.

— A buoyed or occupied bathing or swimming area.

— A person in the water or on the water in a personal flotation device.

— An anchored or moored vessel.

— A vessel that is drifting or sitting dead in the water.

■ A person shall not operate a personal watercraft if a child under 7 years of age is on board or towed unless with a parent or guardian or designee of parent or guardian.

■ A person under the age of 14 shall not operate a personal watercraft in this state.

■ A person who is 12 but less than 14 may operate a personal watercraft

if he or she obtained a boating safety certificate before January 1, 1999.

■ Persons born after December 31, 1978 shall not operate a personal watercraft unless they obtain a boating safety certificate.

■ The operators of a personal watercraft must carry their boating safety certificate and display it upon the demand of a peace officer.

■ Non residents shall only operate a personal watercraft if they possess a boating safety certificate

Source: Michigan DNR

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Fleet Captain's Corner

Greetings to all you lovers of the sea (or ocean or lake or steam or puddles even)!

Well this year is off to a great start. No regatta due to rain, last minute notice of the Sailor's meeting, and Steve's busy with Dominic while I finish out the school year while getting to write his last minute Fleet Captain's article and incur the wrath of the Barker's editor. However, did you see the 4 MC's and a sunfish on the lake Sunday? What a sight!

Steve is working on getting the plaques for the Yacht Club to display the names of those that won the races for the season, regattas, and sailors of the year. When it's up we'll let you know by Barker and post last year's standings again.

The course will remain the same as last year, especially in light of gas prices the committee boat doesn't have to move. We'll have a MC Fleet, and three Sunfish Fleets (A,B, and Jr.) All ages, abilities, and other sailing vessels are welcome; M-16's, Cat's, and the infamous EGO. If you don't know what, how or where to go give us a call or come on out and we'll help you through!

Speaking of Committee Boat...We want to thank again all of you who helped run races last year! Artie, Patty L., Julie P., Stan and Stewart, Steve R., Ryan G., Phil and Sandy, Debbie B., and anyone I missed please let me know so that you can be recognized. Here are the dates of the races this season, we'll need starters for...well let's see, yup all of them!

June 3,10,17,24, Regatta 30 & July 1 or the 2nd in case of rain, July 8,15,22,29 and August 5,12, 19,26 and Regatta Sept. 1 & 2 or the 3rd in case of rain. Please call to volunteer for a specific date, or dates! Otherwise we'll be calling you and relying on the sailors to a) take a day off in exchange for a bonus at the end of the season or b) find a starter to replace them.

Races will start at 12 weather



Thanks for the photo *Mr. Bob*

permitting, with a 1 o'clock push time. Watch for the marks, if they're out we plan to start, but we'll also call around to spread the word. Most of you are adults and know when you should or should not sail. However, in some situations we will not hold a yacht club sponsored race, but marks will be out for all of you thrill seekers. Such a situation would be if there is a storm/severe weather watch, and/or the committee boat cannot hold anchor (absolutely not on 20mph days). On light wind days, 30 minutes to the first mark or the day is called off.

Speaking of marks, a great big THANKS to Harold Cranmer for

agreeing to put out and pick up the marks yet again this year!

One last request...Dominic loves the water, but is yet too young to master halyard or tiller. We're looking for people who love babies and wish to play with Dominic for a couple of hours while his mommy and daddy are grievously pulled away from him to meet our sailing responsibilities. Dominic is offering to pay you in hugs and smiles.

We are available at home, email, cell, or message with the Vitale's at the Lake.

See you on the lake,

-Erica Vitale

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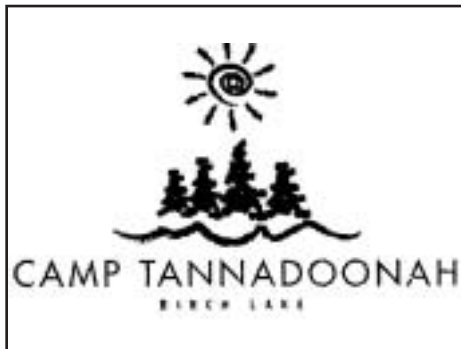
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Tannadoonah Tidbits

I hope everyone enjoyed their Memorial Day weekend at the lake! We were up at camp for the Open House on Sunday, and we had a good turnout. The weather even cleared up just in time! It was a great chance for parents to meet some of our staff, take a tour, and ask questions about camp. This year we opened up a few activities so that prospective campers could try out some of things they might be doing at camp. If you couldn't make it to the Open House, but would still like to visit camp please call or email me anytime.

Monday, June 4th, we will have the first official group of kids up to camp! This summer we have teamed up with the Elkhart YMCA. They will be running a day camp for 40-50 kids up at Camp Tannadoon-ah, and they start their program on June 4th. The following week (June 10-15), the People of Praise will be running their annual week of camp. We think this is the 18th year that they have held their camp at Tannadoonah!

Then on June 17th my summer staff will arrive for



a week of staff training, followed by the arrival of our first group of campers on June 24th. We are now up to 208 campers for this summer! Still doing great, but we want to get to 450 total.

Just like last year, we plan to

invite members of the Birch Lake community to join us for dinner weekly. However, because of some changes we've made to the schedule this year, it will be Friday night dinners, rather than Monday night! That way our guests can also be a part of our weekly themed costume parties, too.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, August 11th! That afternoon is the Birch Lake House Walk, and in the evening we are planning to host a dinner event up at camp. This is one week after the end of our summer season, and we hope that we will be celebrating a wonderful and successful summer! The details aren't settled yet, but we hope that everyone on the lake will join us!

Feel free to stop up and visit anytime — Chas and I will be up at camp most nights starting on June 9th. See you all soon!

Amber Holleman Grundy,
Ph.D.

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Thanks for the photo *Mr. Bob*

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Stu's Star Stuff



Once in a blue moon

Thursday, for the second time this month, the Moon was fully illuminated. According to old folklore, some people say, the second full Moon in a calendar month is called a "blue Moon." They go on to explain that this is the origin of the expression "once in a blue Moon." But it isn't true! The term "blue Moon" has been around a long time, well over 400 years, but its calendrical meaning has become widespread only in the last 25 years or so.

In fact, the very earliest uses of the term were remarkably like saying the Moon is made of green cheese. Both were obvious absurdities, about which there could be no doubt. "She would argue the Moon was blue" was taken by the average person of the 16th century as we take "She'd argue that black is white."

The concept that a blue Moon was absurd (the first meaning) led eventually to a second meaning, that of "never." The statement "I'll marry you, m'lady, when the Moon is blue!" would not have been taken as a betrothal in the 18th century.

But there are also historical examples of the Moon actually turning blue. That's the third meaning — the Moon appearing

blue in the sky. When the Indonesian volcano Krakatoa exploded in 1883, its dust turned sunsets green and the Moon blue all around the world for the best part of two years. In 1927, the Indian monsoons were late arriving and the extra-long dry season blew up enough dust for a blue Moon. And Moons in northeastern North America turned blue in 1951 when huge forest fires in western Canada threw smoke particles up into the sky.

So, by the mid-19th century, it was clear that visibly blue Moons, though rare, did happen from time to time, whence the phrase "once in a blue Moon." It meant then exactly what it means today, a fairly infrequent event, not quite regular enough to pinpoint. That's meaning number four, and today it is still the main one.

But meaning is a slippery substance, for we all know of a half dozen songs that use "blue Moon" as a symbol of sadness and loneliness. The poor crooner's Moon often turns to gold when he gets his love at the end of the song. That's meaning number five: check your old Elvis Presley or Bill Monroe records for more information.

And did I mention a slinky blue liquid in a cocktail glass, one that requires curaçao, gin, and perhaps a twist of lemon? That's number six.

So fix yourself one and get out there and enjoy the show. It's free.

-Stu Spratt

The Moon tonight:

The moon for June 2 (at Midnight)
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2007 Dues, Contributions & Donations Form

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