

BIRCH BARKER

A Publication for the Members of Birch Lake Yacht Club

Volume Eleven, August 4, 2001



Barker photos by Phil Vitale

The big news of the week is the continued heat spell that brought temperatures near 100 degrees and humidity levels that left us a covering of haze every morning. Despite the steambath, the county managed to pave at least a part of Birch Road along the east shore (including the hill near the landing).

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

My thanks to John Ball and Jim Beck for a great day of golf and an excellent meal. It sure was fun and now we have a year to practice to try to dethrone the number 1 team next year.

Paula Russell and Elizabeth Parkinson had another great turnout for KIDS Science. Remember to get your kids to

the Yacht Club, Saturday, August 4th from 10:30 am to noon for the last KIDS Olympics program.

What a busy week we have planned for the Yacht Club. The ladies decorated the Yacht Club for the Ladies Luncheon on Wednesday, August 1st. They were expecting a sold out crowd for this event.

Also, the Ladies Golf Outing and lunch at Lindy's should be a great success. Thanks to Mardy Miller and Betsy Custard for chairing this

event.

Plan to come to the Jimmy Buffett Party at the Yacht Club, Saturday, August 4th. Jim and Sally Beck have run this event the last 3 years and it has proved to be one of the BEST events of the season! Get on those "Island Clothes" and check out our Margaritas. Bring and hors d'oeuvre to share and enjoy the music. See you there.

*Your Commodore
-Mike Machalleck*

Birch Lake Calendar

- 8/4 - Jimmy Buffett Party
KIDS Olympics 10:30 am
- 8/1 - Kids Regatta 1 pm
- 8/18 - Corn & Sausage Roast
Homeowners Assn. 9 am
- 8/19 - BLYC Board Meeting 9am
- 8/25 - Fall Dinner/Annual Meeting
- 9/3 - Labor Day Regatta
- 11/22 - Turkey Day Regatta

Buffett Party tonight!

Take a trip on Desdemona's Rocket Ship at the Yacht Club with hosts Jim and Sally Beck tonight (Saturday, Aug 4th) at 7 pm (Indiana time) for the annual Jimmy Buffett party.

Break out those "Island Clothes" and visit Sharkey's Bar for Margaritas, beer, and various other libations, and of course, plenty of good Jimmy Buffett music.

Bring an hors d'oeuvre to share.

KIDS Olympics today

Kids Olympics, the third in the Birch Lake Yacht Club KIDS' events will take place from 10:30 am to Noon today (Saturday, Aug. 4th). All kids are welcome to come out to compete and share in the fun and refreshments.

And don't miss the **KIDS Regatta** will August 11 at 1 pm. All sailors should plan on meeting at the Harman's pier on the East Shore prior to 1 pm.

BIRCH LAKE YACHT CLUB FALL DINNER

Saturday, August 25
Birch Lake Yacht Club
6 pm Cocktails - 7 pm Dinner
\$10 adults - \$5 children
Polish Dinner Buffet

TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED BY 8/18
(available at Buffett Party, Corn & Sausage Roast or mail below)

_____ Adults at \$10@ equals _____

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_____ total number

_____ total \$ enclosed

NAME _____

_____ tickets will be held for you at the door

Return to: Jim Bolinger
63276 Birch Road (East Shore)
Vandalia, Mi 49095



If you have items for the BARKER, please put the materials in the Barker box at 63174 Birch Rd. (East Shore) by 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoon, or e-mail the info to me at sailorphil@philvitale.com by Monday at Noon. If you must, mail (10 days prior to desired publication date) to Phil Vitale, 122 So. Michigan, So. Bend, IN 46601, or fax your items to (219) 232-3853. To contact me, call Phil at 476-1680 or (219) 232-3735.

Note: All times in the Barker are IST (Indiana Standard Time) unless stated otherwise

Birch Lake Notes

News From The Cove?

For the poor rubes who have nothing else going on

By Sandi Beach

Filling in for Sunny Waters who better get back toute de suite or I'm sure to die of ptomaine poisoning.

In an effort to be hospitable, several Birch Lakers have invited me to dine with them. The first invitation came from a seemingly nice couple. When I knocked on their door the husband, I think his name was Phil, took one look, grabbed a handful of Tootsie Rolls, slung them at me and said, "Sure is a scary mask you got on. Happy Halloween." Before the door slammed shut the wife, Sandy, if I'm not mistaken, grumbled, "It's not Halloween, dummy."

"Coulda fooled me. So long, Kid."

My next hosts were some people on the south shore. While they appeared to be most hospitable, J.J., the lady of the house, was a little ditsy. The dinner table was beautifully set and the main course was tasty. Salad was served European style, after the entree. It was most appealing until the first bite. What the hostess obviously mistook for ranch dressing was, in fact, Coppertone sunblock. I don't wish to discuss the consequences.

The following evening, still feeling

sunblock squeamishness, I was the guest of Howard and Beth Blackwood who displayed their culinary skills with Aldi peanut butter spread thinly on bread colorfully dotted with green and blue patches. The bread wasn't the only thing turning green. As if sent from heaven, my cell phone rang and I told the Blackwoods that I had to leave due to an emergency. Actually it was telemarketing but I was so grateful that I called them back and ordered one of their \$40,000.00 sprinkling systems and gave the the names and phone numbers of ALL the people at Birch Lake whom I knew would just love to hear from them.

The last invitation came from Gertie and Bob something or other. By this time I had absolutely no trust in Birch Lake cooks and zebra mussel's brulee in a pastry shell; the mere thought sent me to worship the porcelain god.

You wonder why I have an attitude? I don't give bodiddly if Sunny hasn't recovered from her big-deal eyelash implant: I'M OUTTA HERE!

May the bluebird of happiness drop little bundles of cheer upon you.

-Sandi Beach

Sandi Beach



Coming next week: Sunny's back with an all-new look!



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Birch Lake Notes

Congratulations Kim & Stu

Assuming that there were no radical changes of plans, by the time you read this Barker, Kim Pritz will be the bride of Stewart Spratt. The couple was scheduled to be married on Friday, Aug. 3 in South Bend.

The newlyweds intend to make their home in South Bend during the week and in the off months, and spend considerable time at the Spratt cottage on the north shore, where Stewart will continue to watch the stars.

3,2,1...KIDS Science Blasts Off

About 25 Birch Lake young scientists attended KIDS Science on Saturday, July 28th. They constructed CO2 rockets

that blasted off up to 20 feet, made colorful GAK, and made lava volcanoes. They also learned about birds and how they eat, as well as vortex tornado tubes!

The kids enjoyed refreshments of popcorn, cookies, juice, and candy. Thanks to adult "lab techs" Paula Russell, Elizabeth Parkinson, Ann Kesmodel, and Helen Toth.

See you Saturday at KIDS Olympics!

Crazy camping cousins

Last week, five of the youngest Toth cousins attended Camp Tannadoonah. Matthew Toth, 13, enjoyed sports and sailing. Katie Kesmodel, 12,

swam the full length of the lake without a life jacket as her counselors rowed across the lake. Congratulations Katie!

Lauren Kesmodel, 9, loved making arts and crafts.

Patrick Russell, 8, loved the food, as well as sports and drama. Connor Russell, 5, AKA "Super Con" and "Ladies Man", was popular with the ladies!

Though their parents still don't believe it, Matthew and Katie both won the "golden broom" award for the cleanest cabin.

Had there been recognition for the messiest cabin, Patrick and Connor would have won hands down!

All cousins (and parents) are

looking forward to next year!

Thanks Camp Tannadoonah!

Blackwood Quartet to sing

The Pleasant View Church of Christ is having the Blackwood Quartet in concert on Sunday August 5, at 6 P.M. MI time.

The Blackwood quartet sings southern gospel mostly. everyone welcome no admission charge but a offering will be taken for the group.

The address of the church is 60550 Crooked Creek Road, Cassopolis, MI, at the corner of Crooked Creek Road and M-60



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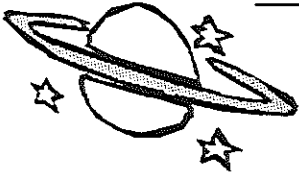
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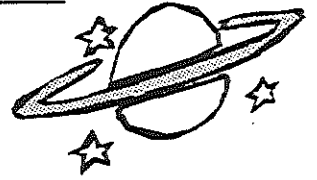
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Have A Safe and Fun Summer!



Stu's Star Stuff The dog days arrive



In the early morning hours the eastern sky holds some interesting sights this time of year. Sirius, the Dog Star, is becoming visible in the predawn twilight. Sirius is the brightest star in the night sky. It is outshined only by Jupiter and Venus. Because it is so bright, legend has it that the heat from Sirius combines with the heat from the sun, giving us the excessively hot weather we often call the dog days of summer.

Along with Sirius comes a harbinger of winter, (a horrifying thought) Orion, the Hunter. Orion's belt, a distinct line of three bright stars, is visible now stretching straight up from the horizon. As summer winds down and we get into fall, Orion

will rise earlier and earlier, and the stars making up his belt will become more horizontal. By winter Orion will have assumed his familiar place in the southern sky for most of the night.

Follow the line of three stars up from the horizon and a little to the left and you will find Aldebaran, the orange eye of Taurus the Bull. Near Aldebaran lie members of the Hyades star cluster, a loose collection of stars held together by the stars' mutual gravitational attraction. Aldebaran, although not a member of the cluster, is often "attached" to the group to complete a "V" shape pattern to symbolize the bull's face.

Further up from the horizon, past Aldebaran, is one of my favorite sights in the summer sky

— the Pleiades. The Pleiades is a cluster of several hundred young stars about 400 light-years from Earth. The stars were all born from a single cloud of gas and dust, and they move through space as a group. Right now, the stars are passing through a DIFFERENT interstellar cloud from the one in which they were born. Photos of the cluster reveal wisps of gas and dust in the second cloud that are painted blue by light from the hot, young stars.

To the unaided eye, the Pleiades looks like a tiny dipper-shaped pattern of six moderately bright stars. Ancient Japanese skywatchers named the star pattern "Subaru." That's why the logo on Subaru cars shows six stars. The new Japanese national

telescope in Hawaii is also named Subaru. But in very dark skies, to those with keen eyesight, a seventh star is visible, too. For some American Indian tribes, finding that seventh star was a vision test. The extra star helps give the cluster its nickname the Seven Sisters. The Pleiades are particularly stunning when viewed through binoculars.

In the early morning, look for the Pleiades by following the line made by Orion's belt. Look a bit left of that line. Watch how the belt begins to flatten out over the coming weeks as Orion climbs higher into the early hours' sky. And for now, enjoy the dog days and the show. They're both free.

—Stewart Spratt

Sailing News



Once again, no WIND!!!! Hopefully we can get some races in before Labor Day.

The Kidzgatta ia coming up Sat., Aug 11 at 1 PM. There will be FREE T-Shirts for all participants. Hope to see all of you there.



—Jim Beck
fleet captain 2001

Hey Kids!!!

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with AAA of Michigan, Stearns Manufacturing and Wellington Water Sports, is offering a drawing for young boaters to receive a free PFD. Michigan conservation officers carry postage paid drawing cards that are handed out to boaters during the boating season. A drawing is held during the boating season and if your name is drawn you will receive a free PFD delivered by a conservation officer. For an opportunity to win a free PFD, please contact a Michigan conservation officer on the water during the boating season.

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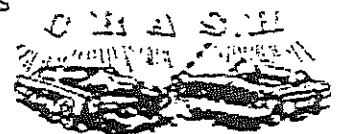
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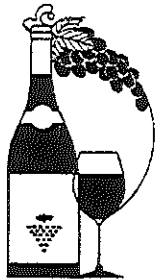
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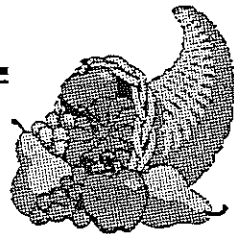
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Best of Beck's Bistro



Oven French Toast

Prepare and Refrigerate overnight 1 loaf French Bread cut into 1-inch thick slices.

Fill 9-inch square baking dish with bread slices so the dish is completely covered, and filled to the top.

Mix 6 large eggs, 1 1/2 cups each, milk and half and half, 1 tsp vanilla, 1/8 tsp each, cinnamon and nutmeg.

Pour mixture over bread slices. Refrigerate covered overnight.

When ready to bake, heat oven to 350 degrees. Place on cookie sheet to catch spills.

Topping: 1 stick butter (unsalted) softened
1 cup packed light brown sugar
2 Tlbs dark corn syrup
1 cup coarsely chopped pecans

Mix butter, brown sugar, and corn syrup. Stir in pecans. Spread topping evenly over bread slices. Bake until puffed and golden,

about 40 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Mandarin Orange Cooler

1 shot of Mandarin Vodka
Add ice
Fill with tonic water
Garnish with an orange slice.

Very refreshing with a good orange taste.

The Birch Lake Fishing Corner

How to release a fish unharmed

The Michigan DNR recommends the following steps to ensure a fish intended for release has the best chance for survival:

- Play and land fish as rapidly as possible to reduce exhaustion stress. This is especially critical when water is warm.
- Keep the fish in the water as much as possible.
- Do not squeeze the fish or place fingers in the gills. A landing net is helpful.
- Remove the hook gently. Rather than pulling the hook out of a deeply hooked fish, cut the line (leader). The hook will decompose in time.

To revive an exhausted fish while fishing in inland waters or streams, hold it gently in an upright position facing downstream in fairly calm water and move it slowly back and forth to move water through its

gills. Release the fish gently in quiet water after it can hold itself upright and has regained strength to swim from your gentle grip.

The use of artificial files and lures is recommended whenever many fish are being caught and released. Survival of

released fish is five to 10 times greater when the angler uses artificial rather than natural baits.

Anglers may choose to use barbless hooks so fish can be released more easily. Standard hooks can be made barbless by flattening the barb with needle-nose pliers.

Fish stories

Currently only two state record fish have been caught by Cass County fishermen:

Black Bullhead

Weight: 3.44
Length: 17
Year: 1999
Water Body: Magician Lake
County: Cass
Angler: Louie Keller

Warmouth Bass

Weight: 1.02 lbs
Length: 10 inches
Year: 2000
Water Body: Eagle Lake
County: Cass
Angler: Mark A. Losee

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ML&SA partnership update

Michigan Lake and Stream Associations (ML&SA) has a partnership with the Michigan Department Environmental Quality (MDEQ) to assist in the collection of samples and information that provide insight to the quality and trophic status of the lake. This partnership is titled the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program. Birch Lake is taking part in 4 targeted parameters:

- 1) Secchi disk readings*
- 2) spring and summer phosphorus concentrations*
- 3) chlorophyll a concentrations*
- 4) depth profiles of dissolved oxygen.*

1999 and 2000 results: Oligotrophic high quality Mesotrophic
Birch Lake is proof that a lake can improve from Mesotrophic to very low Mesotrophic with controlled watershed management and residents who are loyal to the lake.

Birch Lake has no agriculture, septic system, stream, road runoff or groundwater problem. Birch Lake has a program that fertilizes lawns with 0 phosphorus runoff.

Last summer marked a change in the lake environment.

Birch Lake participated in the Zebra Mussel Monitoring & Reporting Program directed by Mike Klepinger, Exotic Species Program Coordinator, Michigan Sea Grant, Michigan State University. Mr. Klepinger tells us that the early warning allows us to develop a program to stop the invasion of the veligers spread by boat owners and anglers.

The initial hypothesis is that zebra mussels clean up a lake.

Clear waters do not necessarily mean safe, clean waters.

The prodigious filtering of water by zebra mussels may increase human and wildlife exposure to organic pollutants (PCBs and PAHs) Early studies show that zebra mussels rapidly accumulate organic pollutants within their tissues to levels more than 300,000 times greater than concentrations in the environment. Zebra mussel feces and pseudofeces stay at the bottom of the lake. As waste particles decompose oxygen is used up.

The presence of zebra mussels increases the algae growth rate.

Algae is digested more rapidly than it decomposed before the mussels arrived. This results in more rapid recycling of phosphorus and nitrogen which provides more nutrients to stimulate the growth of new algae:

- 1) Cladophora a filamentous green algae that attaches to rock*
- 2) Lyngbyl a filamentous blue-green algae in mussel beds*

Noxious blue-green algae blooms are not likely to be reduced by zebra mussel filtration.
During recent Microcystis blooms in western Lake Erie and in Saginaw Bay, zebra mussels were observed rejecting the clumps of Microcystis pulled into their siphons.

UNDERSTANDING RAPID ALGAL ASSESSMENT DATA

This summer, Rapid Algal Assessment is a powerful addition to other water quality data being collected. Birch Lake is *one of ten lakes* participating in the pilot program developed by ML&SA and MDEQ. This new parameter provides even more information about the status of Birch Lake.

Algae are a diverse group of photosynthetic organisms, growing in the water column and on submerged surfaces in ponds, lakes and streams, often to great excesses. *Because they use nutrients dissolved in the water and reproduce on the order of a few hours to a few days, algae respond very quickly to changes in the lake environment.*

Algae often are the first biological indicator to respond to environmental change, so monitoring algae population can provide accurate feedback on the increasing or decreasing of the water quality of Birch Lake.

-g temple

The Loon is on the move in Michigan

LANSING — The common loon, the familiar symbol for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Nongame Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund, is on the move.

Beginning April 2 of this year, Michigan drivers have the opportunity to show their support for Michigan's endangered, threatened and nongame wildlife by purchasing a wildlife habitat license plate for their vehicle. Michigan taxpayers, who were encouraged to "look for the loon" on the state income tax form for many years, now have a new opportunity to show their support through the wildlife plate.

Since the nongame fund was established in 1983, the program has had three main goals:

- To restore populations of endangered and threatened species through management and protection.
- To maintain present populations of animals and plants.
- To promote appreciation and awareness of Michigan's nongame wildlife and endangered species through education and first-hand opportunities to experience wildlife.

Species management efforts are aimed at restoring endangered and threatened animals and plants and keeping common species common. Peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, gray wolves, Kirtland's warblers, Mitchell's satyrs, lake sturgeon and common terns are just a few of the hundreds of wildlife species that have benefited from projects supported through the trust fund. Wildlife recreation also has benefited. The fund supports a network of more than 100 watchable wildlife sites throughout Michigan. These sites provide a variety of opportunities to view some of our state's most popular wildlife species. The watchable wildlife program also promotes efforts that teach people how to responsibly photo-

graph and view all forms of wildlife and plants.

Wildlife education is the program's third major focus. Over the years, a number of educational programs have been supported including distribution of more than three million habitat and species posters and funding for numerous interpretive trails, signs and programs. Most recently, the fund has supported over 100 small grants to schools as part of the Nature Education Sites for Tomorrow (NEST) program. This program encourages schools to develop and maintain nature education sites on school grounds using native plant species.

Since its inception, the Nongame Fish



and Wildlife Trust Fund has raised more than \$9.5 million in support of critical projects for nongame species. In partnership with the Secretary of State's office, the new fund raising vehicle registration plate will provide Michigan's citizens with an opportunity to help the program continue and grow.

Birch Lake Yacht Club Past Commodores

1961 - John Machalleck
 1962 - Bill King
 1963 - Seldon Foote
 1964 - Earl Troeger
 1965 - Chas Purdy
 1966 - John Ball
 1967 - Dale Bratcher
 1968 - Floyd Fulmer
 1969 - Dick Cowen
 1970 - Jack Troeger
 1971 - Bruce Harlan
 1972 - J. Beehler
 1973 - Terry Montague
 1974 - Bob Ross
 1975 - Joe O'Brien
 1976 - Bill Hayden
 1977 - Judy Olson
 1978 - Dick Whiteman
 1979 - Roy Henderson
 1980 - Dave Anthony
 1981 - Chuck Fortino

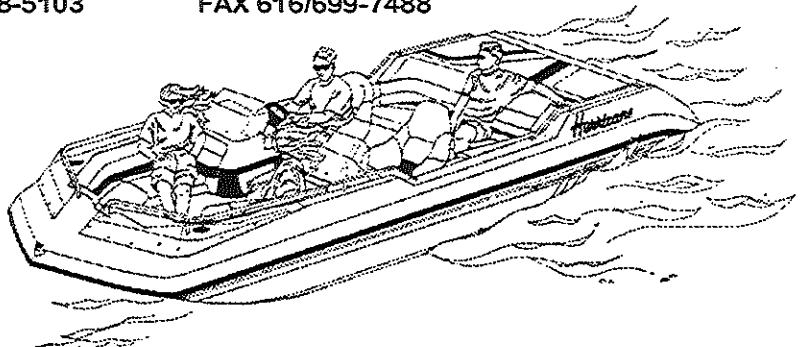
1982 - Earl Troeger
 1983 - Earl Troeger
 1984 - Herm Kruggel
 1985 - Randy Welch
 1986 - Mike Machalleck
 1987 - Ken Tate
 1988 - Dan Reynolds
 1989 - Harold Cranmer
 1990 - Buzz Rasmussen
 1991 - Bud Zesinger
 1992 - John Gableman
 1993 - Rich Mullin
 1994 - Bob Waddle
 1995 - Linda Curtis
 1996 - Sue Wagner
 1997 - Scott Troeger
 1998 - Al Cover
 1999 - Jim Beck
 2000 - Bob King

2001 - Mike Machalleck (current)
 2001 Vice-Commodore - Jim Bollinger



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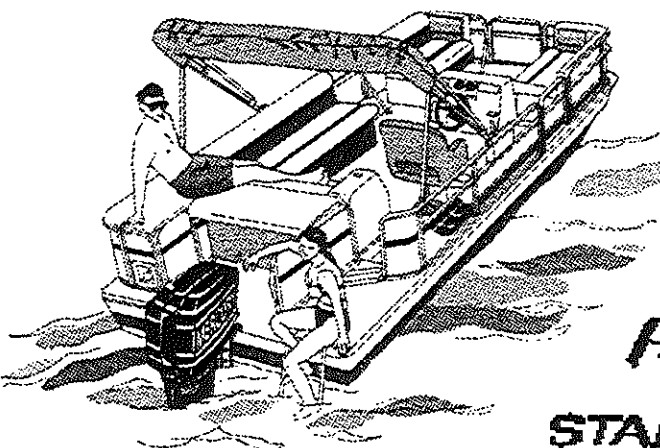
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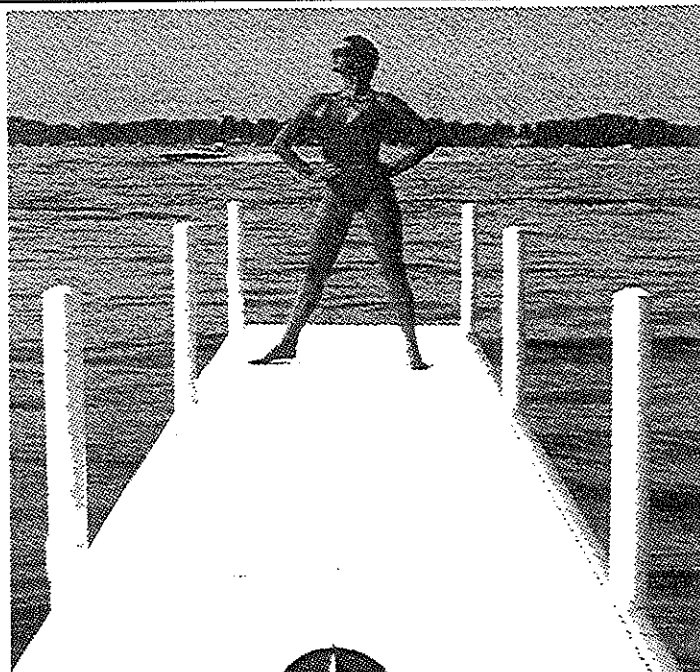
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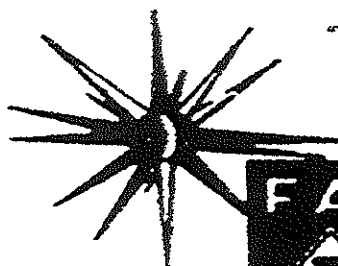
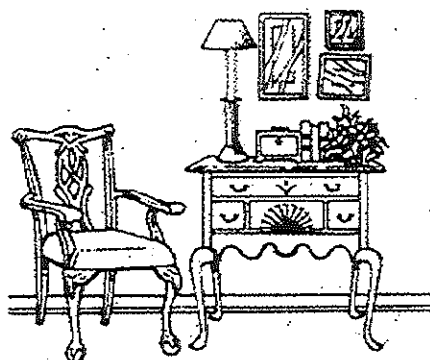
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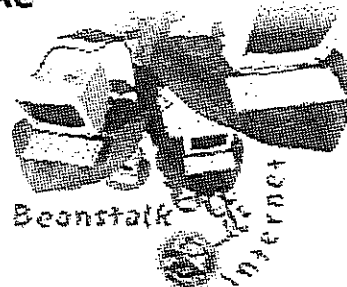
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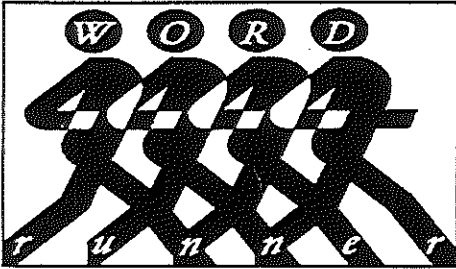
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21st Century Lake Life

When we bought our place at Birch in 1972, we lived in a small northwestern suburb of Chicago, and the three-hour drive from one home to the other served as a journey between disparate worlds. The Village of Barrington, our Illinois home, had a population of less than 10,000, but we could be at O'Hare Field in 20 minutes, and downtown Chicago took us less than an hour to reach by car.

Barrington meant hurried meals and short nights of sleep. It served as headquarters for travel, business, social activities, exercise, theater, and anything else we could cram into eighteen-hour days. The lake meant ssslllooooooww down, relax, look at the trees, stare at the water, have fun, spend time with our daughters, stare at the water some more, enjoy each other, talk, walk, sail, and when all else failed, stare at the water.

We came to Birch at least once a month all year long. Shirley Anne and the girls lived here during the summers, (I flew in or drove in on weekends) and we spent

Thanksgiving and Christmas vacations here. This became our land for decompression, for intense discussion, for deepening love as a family. I always felt liberated and free of burdens the moment, we started down one of the hills and our headlights lit up the water.

Every major decision we made throughout the '70s and early '80s, we made on these shores. At Birch we could take the time to think and to talk and the phone rarely rang because we didn't give out the number to outsiders. Dawn decided before she turned 12 that she wanted to live here someday, and Lisa declared, and still believes, that this place is "home."

Life on Birch is much different for us now. Lisa and her family live within 15 miles of our old Barrington home, and Dawn, though she and her family live next door to us when we're at the lake, is a wife and a mother and a teacher and a very busy person.

We've stopped traveling except for pleasure, and my work is now "a moveable feast" that goes with me wherever I am. As a writer in the 21st Century I have a blessing and a curse. Modern technology, and especially the Internet, enables me to write and sell my short stories, and essays, and books without leaving my home. That's the blessing. My home and my workplace are now inseparable. That's the curse.

Two of my recently completed books and a reissue of my first mystery will come out over the next few months. A new novel and my earlier one will both appear as e-books for the first time, and early next year we'll do a print version of the second novel. A collection of some of my previously published short stories hits the presses in

September as a trade paperback, an e-book, and a palm book. Who had heard of a palm book even three years ago?

My editors and publishers for the novels live in Canton, New York and London, England respectively, and though we communicate almost every day, I've never met either of them. One book cover (and 15 short story illustrations) came from the gifted hands and the extraordinary imagination of a woman named Haze McElhenny who lives in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and the second cover design sprang from the genius of Sara Fisk who lives in Sacramento, California. For weeks we passed drawings back and forth and discussed design concepts and fictional intent. I've never met Haze or Sara either.

Phil Vitale and I have decided to write, edit, and publish a series of "boutique" books for discreet and limited audiences. We'll be able to work with our printer entirely by e-mail, and we will print books as we sell them, not in the hope that we'll sell them. In the words of Michael Keaton from that marvelous comedy, *Nightshift*, "Is this a great country or what?"

I love being able to do this work in this way, though it took me about four years to figure out how to do it without allowing it to devour our lives. My only problem is that there are no longer any natural or necessary dividing lines I can utilize to maintain the lovely peacefulness and intimacy we have always thrived on at Birch. Our home is family and social life central for us, but it is also my office now, and my business cyber-meeting place. I can go anywhere and anywhere can come here at any moment. Isn't that wonderful? Perhaps the old way was better.

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The top five things pets teach children

We have all heard it — Mom can we get a dog? Why? Can I have a dog for my Birthday? Why? I asked Santa for a Dog and I've been good.

Fidos out there are perfect teachers for children and so are other pets. Following are proven research benefits to granting those wishes:

COMMUNICATION: Children learn the subtle cues their pets give to indicate their feelings. They can later apply this lesson to human interaction because they are more attuned to watching for body posture.

EMPATHY: Children often become curious about the emotions their pets feel. This curiosity will extend itself to others.

NUTURING SKILLS: If properly supervised by adults, a child learns how to take care of another living being, and take pleasure in keeping the pet health and

happy.

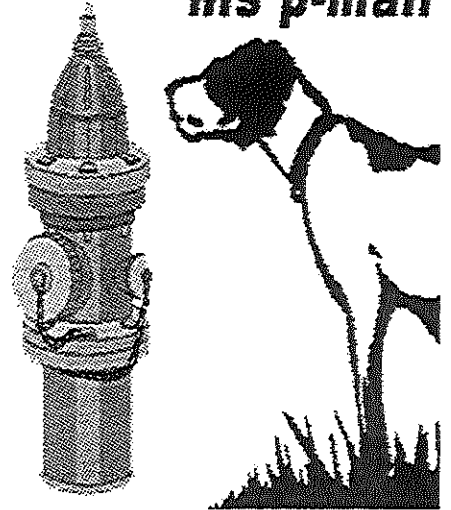
CONFIDENCE: Children go through life under constant evaluation. They are rated by their behavior, grades and athletic performance. This is especially true of middle school children. Pets have no such expectations. Pets give children the sense of unconditional acceptance. No judging or rating is involved.

RESILIENCE TO CHANGE: Children who undergo traumatic experiences often cope better when they have a pet to confide in. Loneliness is very dangerous to children. Having an animal companion can make them feel a part of something all the time.

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