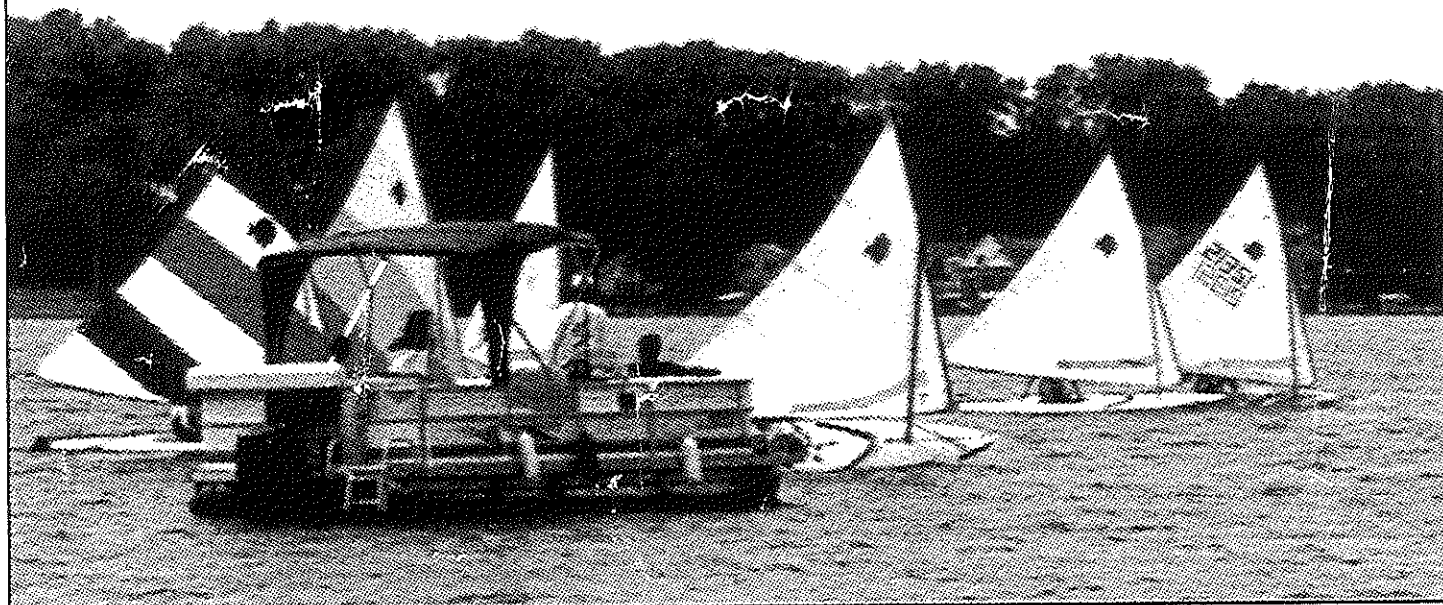


Farewell Summer of 2001



Six boats in the Sunfish fleet converge on the starting line for a season race, passing between the "Committee" boat and the red marker buoy. Committee boat responsibilities

have been directed this year by Fleet Commander Jim Beck and his wife Sally. The Becks were the recipients of this year's Commodore's Trophy, presented at

the Annual Fall Dinner by Past Commodore Mike Machalleck before he passed the title to 2002 Commodore Jim Bolinger.

Barker photo by Patti Russwurm

BLYC Calendar

Sat. & Sun., 9/1 and 9/2 — Labor Day Regatta 11 am
 Mon., 9/3 — Sailing Awards, Yacht Club, 10 am
 Sat., 9/8 — BLYC Board Meeting 9 am

Birch Lake Yacht Club

2002 Officers

Commodore: Jim Bolinger
 Vice Comm: Phil Vitale
 Secretary: TBA
 Treasurer: Holly Troeger
 Fleet Captain: Don Harman

Term expires 8/2003

Fred Freihofer
 Bob Waddle
 Jack Miller
 Vicki Rogers
 Harold Cranmer

Term expires 8/2004

Bruce Wagner
 Paula Russell
 Maryann O'Neill
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 Roger Falk
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 Bill King
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 Scott Troeger
 Sandy Vitale

Directors

Term expires 8/2002
 Mike Machalleck
 Dan Reynolds
 Rick Russwurm
 Dick Bender
 Judy Olson
 Denny Weesner
 Holly Troeger

Hello and Goodbye

First of all, I'd like to thank everyone for all the encouragement and support offered to me as I begin my reign as Commodore. I will do my best to live up to the expectations. We are all fortunate to live on this beautiful lake AND have such sociable, friendly and helpful neighbors.

Specific thanks go to Mike Machalleck for his year as Commodore and for the guiding me through the duties of Vice-Commodore. Next, thanks to Phil Vitale for his willingness to serve as the new Vice Commodore.

Special thanks to the entire Harman/Rondot family, Maryann O'Neill, and Phil Vitale for helping prepare for and serve at the Fall Dinner, and to Patty Russwurm, the Wagners and Sandy Vitale for all their hard work at the beverage end of the counter. It was great to have the dinner so well attended, especially considering the weather in the AM.

As those of you who attend-

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

ed the dinner heard, I have challenged my good buddy Don Harman to return to the "sunfish class" in this weekend's Regatta. I am also encouraging all of you with sunfish sailboats to come out and give us, and all the other regulars, a run for our money (so to speak) provided the weatherman takes pity on us and provides us with a little wind!

That's all I have for this first attempt, and as this is the last Barker, I will just say goodbye for this season, but I hope to see you all out on the lake for several weeks yet, and hope for a long Indian summer, too. Then, after the hopefully short and mild winter, we will all meet up again for a glorious summer 2002! Have a happy and safe autumn, winter and spring and I hope we'll see you all at the Spring Dinner in May!

Your Commodore
 Jim Bolinger



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

Good Patty/Bad Patty

It is with great regret that I must publicly defend myself and my reputation. It has been brought to my attention on numerous occasions — especially those at the Birch Lake Yacht Club — that I am now referred to as “BAD PATTY.”

I must set the record straight before this slanderous title is passed on to my children and they must carry this stigma with them throughout their adult lives.

One pleasant Saturday afternoon, I was sitting on our deck when our neighbor, Mr. Towelhead, approached me. He demanded that I make him a cocktail. I believe his exact words may have been, “Hey Blondie! Get me a drink!”

I immediately prepared a fruitful libation for Mr. Towelhead, which he consumed quite quickly. He insisted that I make him more and more and more...

Meanwhile, we were joined by the

young couple from next door and I politely asked them if they would like something refreshing to drink. They replied they would indeed enjoy that, but they would only have one, as they wanted to keep their wits about them. Unlike Mr. Towelhead, who then ordered me to “make some Patty Punch!”

That did not deter Mr. Towelhead. I reminded him that he had dinner plans that evening with his lovely and most gracious wife, Ilene, so he might want to refrain from drinking. He could not be persuaded to quit; he became vocal; I resigned myself to making Patty Punch — I felt like I had no choice.

That evening at dinner, Mr. Towelhead told several of the other guests that I had forced him to drink, and he had begged me to let him leave (how untrue!). Then he told them I deliberately made him consume mass quantities of “Patty Punch” because I did

not like jewels. How absurd! I love jewels! My husband just bought me a lovely cubic zirconia ring in Las Vegas. Would he have spent \$13 on me if I didn't like jewels?

So you see, Mr. Towelhead has certainly changed what actually happened on that day in July. I realize that it is sometimes hard to come to terms with ourselves when we have behaved in an embarrassing manner, but that does not give one cause to tarnish someone's good name and reputation. I have to think of my innocent children. I want them to be able to walk with their heads held high and be able to look our Birch Lake neighbors in the eye and say, “Our mom is not Bad Patty — she is Good Patty!”

Thank you to all of you who have stood by me during this most stressful time. My conscience is clear and I know that the truth always wins out. I hope Mr Towelhead can say the same thing!

Sincerely, (Good) Patty Luecht



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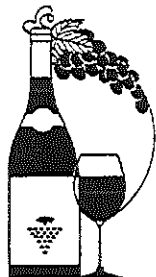
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Tangy Chicken

- 1 lb. chicken pieces
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 Tlbs butter
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup water

- 2 Tlbs brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup catsup

Combine flour and salt; roll chicken pieces in flour mixture to coat.

Fry in skillet in hot oil until browned on all sides. In a small bowl, combine

melted butter, chopped celery, water, brown sugar, pepper, onion, and catsup; pour over chicken in skillet. Cover and simmer 30 minutes, or until thick and celery and onion are tender.

Tried by the Becks and Phil Vitale and very good.

Mexican Coffee

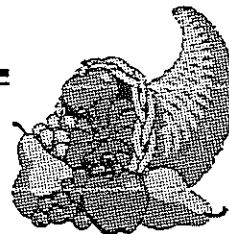
- 1/2 cup strong brewed coffee
- 1 1/2 tsp sugar
- 2 oz semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 cup heated milk
- 2 Tlbs rum
- 1/4 cup sweetened whipped cream
- Cinnamon

Heat the coffee and sugar in a heavy small saucepan, over a low heat, until the sugar is dissolved.

Add the chocolate and a small pinch of cinnamon, and stir until the sugar is dissolved and the chocolate melts.

Add the milk and whisk until frothy. Pour into mugs. Add 1 Tlbs of rum to each mug. Top with whipped cream and dust lightly with additional cinnamon.

Serves 2



Season ender

The 2001 Regular Season Races came to a close Sunday with good wind greeting the sailors. Other highlights of the day included Harold Cranmer taking a mid-race dip and still managing to finish 2nd, and our dog, Stewart, snatching five bees out of mid air.

It's really great to see the sun-fish fleet growing. We know that we've got more MCs out there, so talk to your fellow sailors and get them out!!! There are a lot of Catamarans on the lake as well. Everyone is welcome!!

Thanks to the mark setters and to the committee boat, which was skippered by Phil and Sandy Vitale and crewed by Bruce Wagner, Patti Russwurm, and Steve and Sherri Deranek in my absence.

Don't forget the Labor Day



Sailing News

Regatta Sat. Sept 1, and Sun. Sept. 2, 11 am both days. Three races Sat. and 2 races Sun.

The Sailing Awards will be Monday morning at 10 am at the Yacht Club

I have really enjoyed my stint as fleet captain, and Sally and I have had fun starting the races. With great honor I pass the position, and flag to Don Harman.

-Jim Beck, Fleet Captain 2001

The results of Sunday's races were:

	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3
SUNFISH			
T. Howard	1st	1st	3rd
J. Bolinger	4th	2nd	6th
B. King	3rd	4th	1st
D. Weaver	6th	8th	8th
D. Olson	5th	5th	4th
R. Russwurm	7th	6th	7th
S. Troeger	2nd	3rd	2nd
M. Machalleck	DNS	7th	5th
CATAMARAN			
D. Weaver	1st	1st	1st
MC's			
H. Cranmer	2nd	2nd	3rd
D. Harman	4th	4th	1st
R. Harman	3rd	3rd	4th
D. Troeger	1st	1st	2nd



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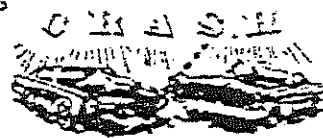
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BIRCH LAKE AQUATIC PLANT PROJECT

What kind of weeds are growing in our big lake garden?

How do we know what weeds are good?

How do we know what weeds are bad?

Birch Lake does not have a weed growth problem or an algae bloom problem. But, we still need to learn about the plants. We need to know what is happening at our lake. We need a Milfoil watch. We need a Curly Leaf Pondweed watch.

There is no aquatic biologist on the water quality committee with Bachelor and Master Degrees from Michigan State University in Fisheries Science and Limnology. But there is a Mr. Howard Wandell with such degrees, who has been hired by the Michigan Lake and Stream Associations to provide professional assistance to the water quality committee at Birch Lake. We appreciate the opportunity.

Aquatic plant mapping is a parameter often missing in a lake management program.

Birch Lake was chosen to take part in the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program.

During the 1st year of the pilot project, participation is limited to only 3 lakes.

Mr. Wandell met with the water quality committee in June of this year to hold a workshop. Also attending were volunteers, Lind Harman, Don Harman, Bruce Wagner.

Mr. Wandell conducted a weed survey of Birch Lake. He collected 12 species for our plant data. He did not find *Eurasian Milfoil*. He did find a small patch of *Curly Leaf Pondweed* which was removed from the lake bottom. Both the *milfoil* and *pondweed* are not native to the lake. Both are an exotic and both are mat forming. *Both are bad*. A small patch of *milfoil* could become a 5 acre patch within one year. A canoe could not get through it. Herbicide treatments costs thousands of dollars — puts chemicals into the lake. We don't want chemicals at Birch Lake.

Mr. Wandell told us how to look for the *milfoil* and the *pondweed*, how to identify it and told us to remove the small patch before it becomes a big patch and a bigger problem.

Mr. Wandell also selected 24 sampling transects around Birch Lake and explained the procedure required to collect good plant data.

Rick Russwurm, Dan Reynolds, Don Harman, Lind Harman and Bruce Wagner have completed the first phase of the project. They have collected good plant data. All transects are completed. They collected weeds at each of their assigned transects. They pitched a rake at each of 4 clock positions at a 1-foot depth site, a 4-foot depth site, and a 10-foot depth site: Dragged the rake along the lake bottom. Hauled it back in the boat. Collected vegetation. Sorted into plant types. Identified the plant. Put it in the plant press.

Mr. Wandell called our committee today to see if we are ready for the next phase of the project: Combine our plant collection with a plant location map and produce an aquatic plant map of Birch Lake. *We are ready.*

Your Birch Lake Yacht Club Water Quality Committee:

Rick and Patti Russwurm, Dan and Janet Reynolds, Bob and Gertie Temple
and volunteers, Don Harman and Lind Harman and Bruce Wagner.

And now a word from Birch Lake:

Thanks Don - Thanks Lind - Thanks Bruce

-g temple

Where have all the Herons Gone?

By Darlene Troyer

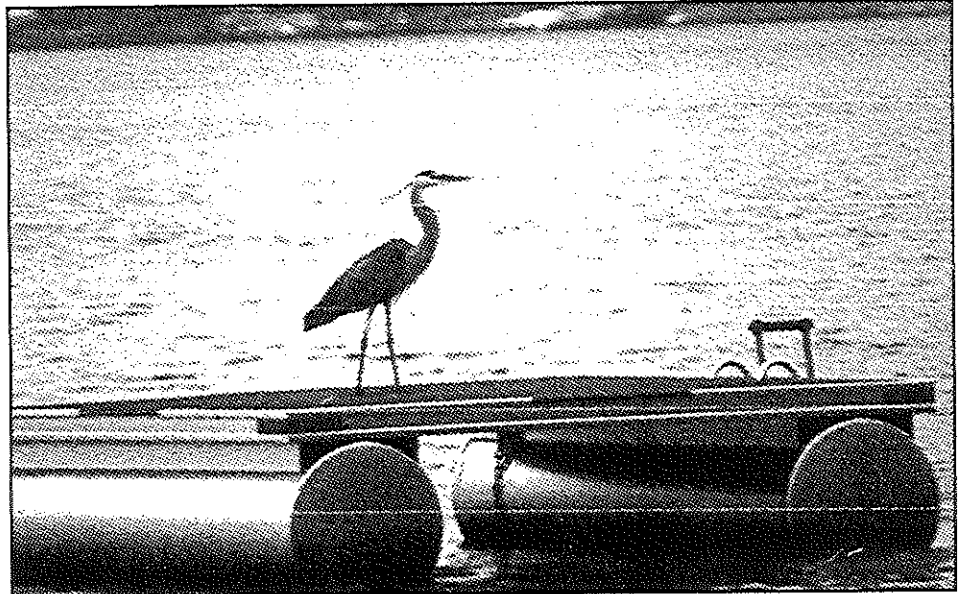
What has a temper, a big mouth and a huge appetite? Teenagers! Yes, teenagers would be an appropriate answer and even though this is a wildlife article they do qualify! However, this week I write about one of my favorite of all of Birch Lake's Wildlife – the Great Blue Heron. Whether flying majestically overhead or standing motionless at the water's edge on a still, misty morning awaiting an unsuspecting fish, the Great Blue Heron embodies grace and elegance.

Birch Lake has been home to the Great Blue Heron for a relatively short time. Their numbers have increased over the past 10 years on our lake until this summer. Even though they still grace our shores we have not had the Heron population of the past years. I am curious as to what has sent them looking for "greener pastures" since early June. I suspect the drought has made their hunting easier in the nearby shallow ponds.

Many of us on the lake have wonderful photos and videos that we have captured as the Blue Heron has graced our lawns and shorelines. Many have Coy Jankowski's wonderful painting hanging in our homes as a reminder of this magnificent bird.

However, I bet no one has the shocking video I have of a Heron eating a Muskrat in our yard! (No, I don't make these things up folks, they really do happen!) I knew I had to videotape this event, as no one would believe me. Imagine if you can, this regal bird stabbing and beating a huge muskrat and then devouring it! I won't give you all the gory details about that event but I thought you should know the Heron is not as innocent as everyone thinks he is.

Heron is a terrific hunter as my video proves! They fish night and day, with most



activity around dawn and dusk. The Great Blue Heron spends 90 percent of its active day foraging for food. They spear fish with their sharp dagger like beaks to catch food and usually swallow their catch whole. If the fish is too large the heron will take it onto the shore, kill it first by beating it into the ground, then pick it apart by biting off bits and pieces. Their diet consists of fish, frogs, salamanders, lizards, snakes, crayfish, dragonflies, grasshoppers, rodents, aquatic insects and a muskrat thrown in every now and then.

The Great Blue Heron ranks as the largest of North American herons and egrets. It has a grayish-blue body, a reddish-brown neck, and sometimes has white or blue splotches near its eyes. It also has a black stripe that starts at its forehead and leads back into what looks like a snake's

tongue. The bill is long, large and yellowish. The legs are long and grayish with reddish thighs. They stand 4 feet tall and weigh between 5-8 pounds. In flight, the legs trail behind the body, and motion is maintained by slow, powerful strokes of wings that can span six feet. They fly at cruising speeds of between 19 and 29 miles per hour. God truly has a sense of humor as is evident in there long gangly legs that bend backwards. Those of us on Birch Lake are aware that herons have a hoarse, deep guttural squawk that they use frequently when they are disturbed by our presence. The Great Blue Heron is relatively quiet compared to other members of its family. Other calls of the heron include a "fraunk" when the bird is

See HERONS on next page

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Beware dogs bearing gifts

I have truly enjoyed writing on behalf of my favorite 4-legged friends. I hope that my nagging about poop scooping and leashing was effective. I suspect it was since nagging is one of my specialties.

One last quick Fido story I just have to share: A friend of mine was having a shower for her daughter and there were a lot of dog-loving ladies there. They all petted and snuggled with her 1-year-old Chihuahua, except for

a Grumpy Great Aunt. The dog kept trying for her attention to no avail. Next thing we knew the dog appeared to give up and left the room. Upon her return she went straight up to the Grumpy Aunt who said, "Oh look, she's got something in her mouth - she's brought me a present!"

She put her hand out and the dog dropped a big piece of poop in it and pranced away! WOW wouldn't we all like to do that to rude guests!

Checking his p-mail



Anyway, thanks for reading. Fido and I will be sure to do our best at fertilizing your lawns while your away for the winter.

Happy Tails!

-Fido's Friend

Happy, happy 80th birthday to Ray Sanders

If you heard a lot of laughter coming the East side this past Sunday, it was coming from the Sanders' house. Ray Sanders' beautiful bride, Sonia, threw him an 80th birthday bash.

Yes another laker that defies aging. Do you think it's something in the water?

Lots of family and friends joined in to celebrate with great food and maybe just a bit to much wine.

Happy Birthday again Ray, from all your friends at Birch Lake.

HERONS

Continued from previous page

disturbed near its nest, and an "ar" when the heron is greeting other members of its species.

Hérons can be seen beside streams, ponds lakes, and road ditches throughout the state. A Great Blue Heron spends most of its time alone except during breeding season, which typically lasts from March - May. During the breeding season the Great Blue Heron is at its most elegant, with long feathers on its back and short feathers on its neck that ruffle in the breeze. They nest in trees and bushes, especially pine, beach, oak, and sycamore trees. Nests are made of sticks and lined with reeds, moss and grass, usually in a colony with other herons. They lay 3 to 5 large blue eggs and they hatch in 28 days. Both parents brood (sit on the

eggs) to keep them warm. When the eggs hatch the mother and father take turns feeding and guarding the chicks until they are old enough to care for themselves.

Juveniles leave the nest after about 60 days and, if they survive their first winter, may live for another 15 years. Sixty-nine percent of newborn Great Blue Herons die in their first year. Many herons are also killed each year due to collisions with utility wires.

In the past, herons and egrets were shot for their feathers, which were used as cooking utensils and to adorn hats and garments, and they also provided large, accessible targets. The slaughter of these birds went relatively unchecked until 1900 when the federal government passed the Lacey Act, which prohibits the foreign and interstate commercial trade of feathers. Greater protection was afforded in 1918 with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which empowered the federal government to set seasons and bag limits on

the hunting of waterfowl and water birds. With this protection, herons and other birds have made dramatic comebacks. In recent years, Great Blue Herons have had to face new challenges. Loss of nesting sites, and deterioration of water quality and wetland habitat are issues of concern for heron survival.

Poor water quality reduces the amount of large fish and invertebrate species available in wetland areas. If suitable feeding and nesting areas are not maintained, populations of Great Blue Herons will eventually decline.

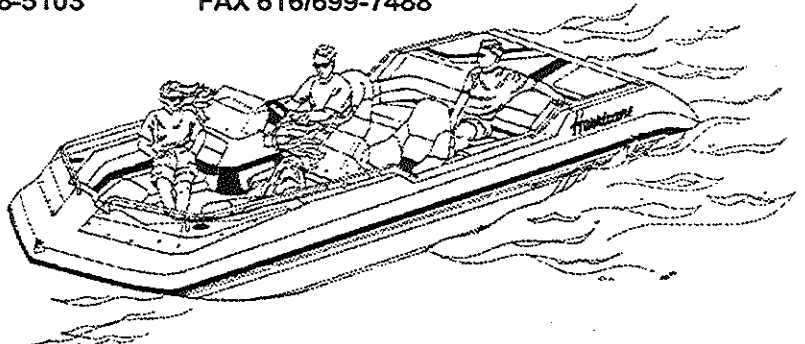
Although Great Blue Herons currently appear to tolerate low levels of pollutants, these chemicals can move through the food chain, accumulate in the tissues of prey and may eventually cause reproductive failure in the herons.

Hopefully the blue herons will return next spring to Birch Lake in full numbers and grace our shores again.



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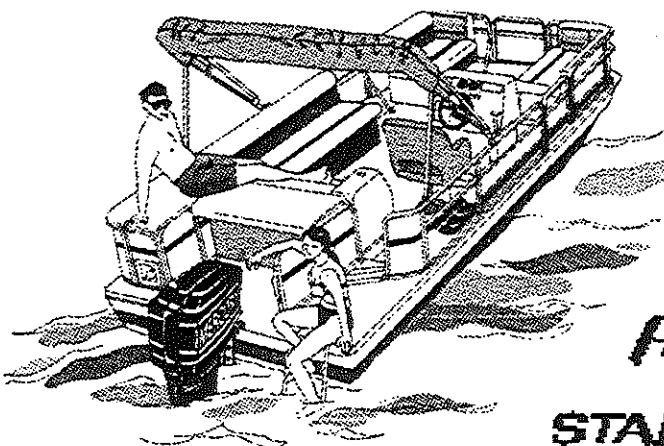
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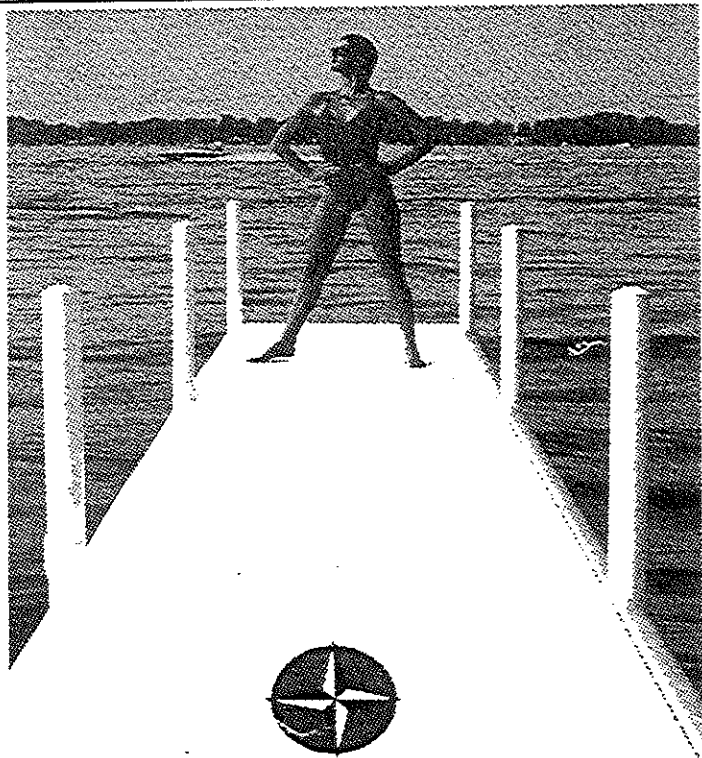
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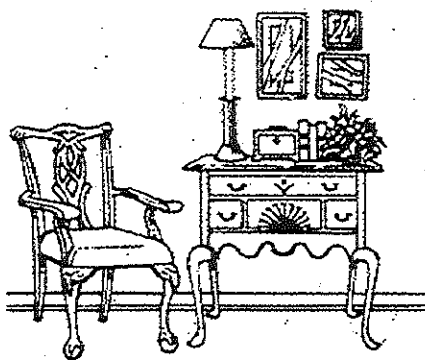
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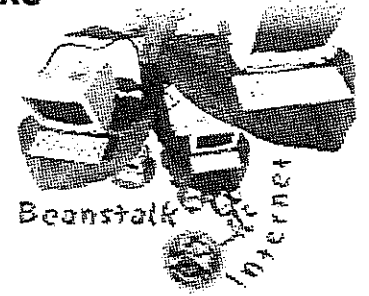
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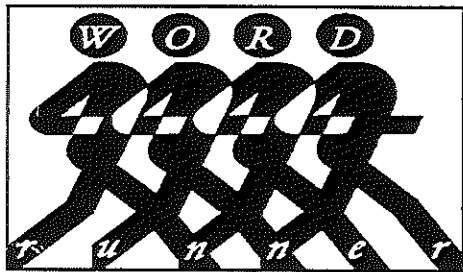
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Thanks to all!



This has been a wonderful summer at our house. After three years of struggle I've finally stumbled onto a work schedule that fits into our life. On weekdays when we don't go into town, I get up early, 5:30 or so, and bang away on the keys until it's time for breakfast. Then I try to squeeze in another couple hours of writing around various morning chores and activities.

We reserve as much of our afternoons and weekends for relaxation, conversation or play as we can, but house and yard work intrude all too frequently, and I have been known to get back on the computer after lunch or on a Saturday morning. Still, it appears to be working pretty well, and Shirley Anne finds it tolerable.

It is this schedule that has enabled me to write a novel over the summer even as I wrote seventeen essays, fifteen of which were for The Birch Barker. When Phil asked me to do the WordRunner pieces last spring, I wasn't certain, I could meet his schedule, and I didn't know what I would write about, but he told me to "write about anything that interests you," and "give me

as many columns as you can." Nothing interests me much more than life on this lake, and choosing one's own subjects makes writing an easier proposition.

I have thanked Phil for putting me on this gig, and I want to thank all of you for reading my words, and for letting me know you found them acceptable. It is a joy and a privilege to express my ideas to kindred souls, singing the praises of this place we all love.

I spent 30 years working in industries where social interaction was the order of the day, but I am not by nature a gregarious person. Communicating through written words is often easier and more enjoyable for me than talking, and you all have been gracious and tolerant as I spent the summer running off at the word processor.

Some of you have asked me where the "WordRunner" name comes from; it is the name I chose as an internet identity when Shirley Anne and I signed up with AOL several years ago. I saw it as kind of summary word for the way I live my life, running and writing. Both are solitary activities, at least in the way I practice them, but both are also the best methods I've found for getting out among and communicating with other people.

Originally, Phil's notion about this column was that we would make it anonymous, so a mystery name seemed appropriate. However, I soon ran out of stories I could tell without reference to my own life, so I blew my cover early. Now I find I kind of like using my name as a nom de plume.

I have a finish for this piece, but it ties more to the overall notions I've been trying to convey this season than to anything I've said in this essay. A few years ago while Shirley Anne and I were vacationing in Florida, I found an inscribed stone plaque that now sits on my nightstand wherever we happen to be. It says, "If the one you love with all your heart, returns your love, you have everything in life that counts." Amen. This homily is intended to remind lovers of the great gift of their shared lives, but you can add an "s" to the word "one" in the inscription, and it will expand the meaning of the phrase to include your family and all of those people and places you care about most. I know of nothing I believe in as much as I believe in those words.

See you next spring, and until then, please take good care of each other.

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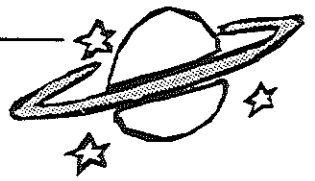
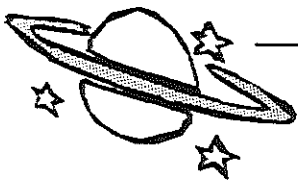
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Stu's Star Stuff Upcoming events

The Moon reaches full on Sunday this weekend. Careful observers will notice that its apparent size is a bit smaller right now. That's because Sunday marks the most distant full Moon of the year. Watch as it rises about 6 degrees further north the next few evenings.

Although diminished from its earlier summer brilliance, Mars still outshines all evening stars. Find it in the south at dusk. The planet lines up with the leading edge of the "teapot's spout," part of the constellation of Sagittarius.

Upcoming Events

In September, watch as the Moon recklessly bolts across the early morning sky causing near misses with three planets. The first encounter results in an occultation of Saturn. An occultation is when one celestial object passes in front of another, temporarily

hiding it from view. This occurs on Sept. 10. On Sept. 12 the Moon brushes past Jupiter and on the 24th the Moon and Mars make a dazzling pair. Look about an hour and a half before sunrise for the first two, about an hour after sunset for the Mars encounter.

Meteors can be seen most any night of the year, but there are predictable showers that occur quite regularly. One of the better ones is the Orionid shower which peaks on October 21. It so named because the streaks of light can be traced back to an origin that appears to be within the constellation Orion. The meteors can be seen anywhere in the sky though. Another good shower is the Geminid shower which peaks on December 14.

The first half of 2002 will feature gatherings of bright planets in the evening sky, with ALL FIVE in the west in April - May.

Be sure to look nightly.

The Space Shuttle, International Space Station and numerous satellites can be seen if you know when and where to look. Check out www.heavens-above.com for a schedule and other interesting information.

Finally, in February 2002, look for the biannual Vagon space procession. This colorful and creative parade of intergalactic spacecraft marches across the sky for most of the month. The parade begins at the revelers' home planet of Vagon in the Andromeda galaxy and winds its way across the sky to terminate at a grand fete near M44, the Bee Hive cluster. It's a bit like Mardi Gras, only on a larger scale.

Enjoy your fall/winter/spring and we'll meet again in May, when I might try eating Corvus. Until then, enjoy the show. It's free.

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-BobCat

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-Phil and Sandy

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