



Birch Barker

A Publication for the Members of Birch Lake Yacht Club

Volume One, June 1, 2002

Improved weather jump starts summer

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Yeah! Happily, the weather cooperated to make most of the Memorial Day weekend very pleasant. It was good to see so much activity around the lake with friends and neighbors making their first "cruises" of the season.

Conditions were perfect for the bonfire at the Yacht Club Sunday night. "Thank you" to all those that came to keep us company while we reduced the stack of branches that had accumulated there.

Tonight is the Commodore's Cocktail Party at the Yacht Club. Please come join us. We would love to see some new faces in addition to all of those that have become good friends already. We will surely have a good time, including karaoke by "DaBob." It will be a 'Music of the Decades' theme so feel free to dress as a past or present music star if you like. It would be nice to have an Elvis or Cher present. Also, think back a while, and if you can remember an appetizer that was all the rage in years past, make some and bring it along to share. In words from the past "BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!"

Also, remember the boat check is next Saturday (June 8th) 10 a.m. - 12 noon, IN time, at Dan Covey's pier. See ya on the lake (or at the BLYC)!

Your Commodore!
-Jim Bolinger

P.S. Our daughter Becky recently graduated from college and is now home for the whole summer for the first time in many years. She is hoping to encourage others in their 20s and 30s to come out of hiding and attend the Yacht Club functions, so they can all make some new friends around the lake. Therefore, if you have one (a 20 or 30 something) too, bring them, or send them, to the party tonight, or any of the other parties. They might be surprised and have a good time.



A bit of snow didn't deter Bob King from flying Old Glory on the mast of his Hobie during the winter months ... let's hope we're done with snow for the year, though so summer at the lake can get into full swing.

photo by Bob King

Birch Lake Yacht Club Calendar for 2002

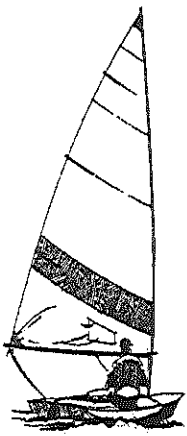
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|---|---|
| June 1Commodore's Party
(Karaoke) | (Rain Day Saturday, 7/6) |
| June 8Boat Check at Covey's pier
10 am - noon | July 6Boat Parade |
| June 15Board Meeting 9 am
Sewer Meeting, 11 am
Vice Commodore's Party
(Blues & Ribs) | July 7Pancake Breakfast
TBA.....Beach Party |
| July 5Fireworks | July 26Men's Golf Outing |
| | Aug. 3Women's Golf Outing |
| | Aug. 7Women's Luncheon |
| | Aug 10Corn and Sausage Roast |
| | Aug. 24Fall Dinner |



If you have articles or photos 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 (574) 232-3853. To contact me, call Phil at 476-1680 or (574) 232-3735.

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

Birch Lake Yacht Club Sailing News



Last Monday a sailing meeting was held at the Yacht Club. The purpose of this meeting was to explore ways to increase interest in sailing. The more boats we have out, the more fun the sailors have, as well as those on the shore who enjoy seeing all the

boats out on the lake.

It was decided that we would have two Sunfish Fleets, an "A" fleet with the more experienced sailors and a "B" fleet

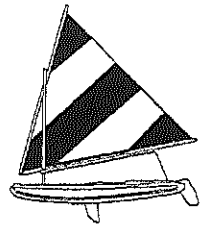
First Week of Sailing

Sunday, June 2, 11 am

Newcomers, novices and first-timers welcome!

with sailors that have little or no experience. This means that anybody can come out and sail competing with sailors who are at the same skill level. So dust off that old boat and come out and enjoy the fun of sailing.

Also this year you will receive added bonus points by having a crew on board. We are going to put the marks out every Saturday for anyone wishing to practice. For more information call Don Harman 476-2039 or Harold Cranmer



Our regular season races start this Sunday June 2nd at 11 a.m. Indiana time.

-Don Harman, Fleet Captain
476-2039

A summary of significant sailboat racing rules

Here is a summary of the sailing rules that apply most often on the race course.

PORT-STARBOARD: Boats on a port tack (with the wind coming from the port side of the boat) must keep clear of starboard-tack boats.

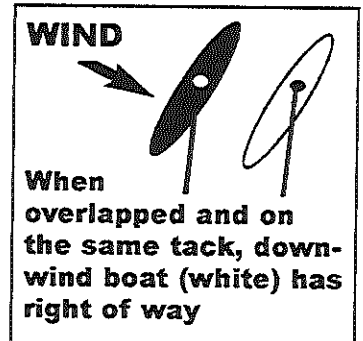
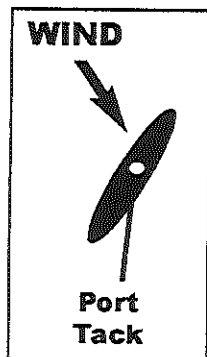
WINDWARD-LEEWARD: When boats are overlapped on the same tack, the downwind boat has the right of way and the windward boat must keep clear.

ON SAME TACK, ASTERN-AHEAD: When boats are on

the same tack and not overlapped, the boat clear astern must keep clear. One boat is "clear astern" if she's entirely behind a line through the other boat's aft-most point, perpendicular to the other boat. Two boats are "overlapped" if neither is clear ahead of the other.

TACKING TOO CLOSE:

Before you tack, make sure your tack will keep you clear



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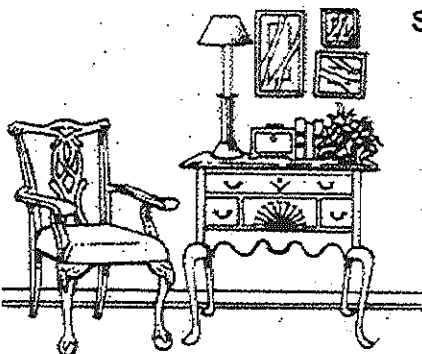
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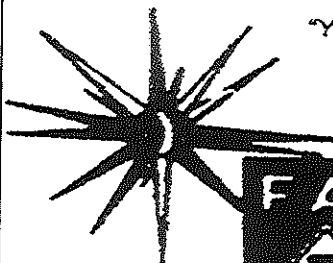
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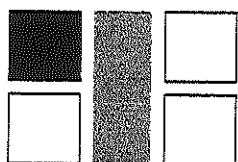
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We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer at Birch Lake!

-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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Rules

Continued from previous page

they are going to pass it. If the leeward boat hails for room to tack, the other boat must give it to her; but the leeward boat must give the other boat time to respond before she tacks.

LIMITATIONS ON RIGHT OF WAY

If the other boat must keep clear, you have "right of way." Even if you have right of way, there are limitations on what you can do:

AVOID CONTACT: You should always avoid contact with other boats.

ACQUIRING RIGHT OF WAY: When you do something to become the right-of-way boat, you must give the other boat a chance to get away from you.

CHANGING COURSE: When you change course, you must give the other boat a chance to keep clear.

ON THE SAME TACK; PROPER COURSE: If you are overlapped to leeward of a boat on the same tack, and if just before the overlap began you were clear astern of her, you cannot sail above your proper course

(i.e., the course that will take you to the next mark the fastest) while you remain overlapped.

OTHER RULES

Before your start and after you finish, don't interfere with boats that are about to start or are racing.

If you break a rule while racing, get away from other boats and do two 360-degree turns; if you hit a mark, do one turn.

If you start too soon, keep clear of others until you get behind the line again.



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First a word from Dr. Niles Kevern

"You've done a good job by reducing pinpoints by correcting faulty septic systems."

Birch Lake is Oligotrophic because of the septic system program.

Birch Lake is sensitive to increased phosphorus loading - insensitive to nitrogen. The deep basin is 95 feet. The deep basin holds sediment. The oxygen level keeps the sediment from entering the lake's water columns. Phosphorus input must be on a continual reduction basis to avoid build-up which affects oxygen and causes phosphorus to enter the columns and feed algae.

Who is Dr. Niles Kevern?

Dr. Kevern was Chair of the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Michigan State University (MSU) from 1969 until retirement in 1995. He was a Professor of Fisheries & Wildlife from 1969 - 1995 at MSU. He also served as Assistant Director and Associate Director of the Institute of Water Research for MSU and Associate Director of Michigan Sea Grant. He received his M.S. Degree in Fisheries Management and a Ph.D Degree in Limnology and Pollution Biology from MSU. He has done individual research and authorship of 8 separate studies, as well as cooperative research and reporting of 29 other areas of study.

Was Dr. Kevern hired to do a study of Birch Lake?

Dr. Kevern retired in 1995 from MSU and serves as Chairman of Michigan Lake & Stream Associations' (ML&SA) Science Advisory Committee. ML&SA decided to explore a new program at the 2002 Annual Conference at *no cost* to the BLYC. We met the criteria and Dr. Kevern called the Temples to set up a private session to interpret the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring reports containing data for Birch Lake: Secchi Disk, Spring Phosphorus, Summer Phosphorus, Chlorophyll a., Dissolved Oxygen, (Rapid Algal, Aquatic Plant Survey).

What other Birch Lake programs were acceptable for interpretation?

Southwestern Michigan Inland Lakes Watershed Analysis Study

1978 data includes Birch Lake maps: Depth Contours, Watershed Land Use/Cover, Drainage and Surface Loading Potential. Monitoring reports classified Birch Lake as middle to low middle. Secchi Disk Transparency was between 6.5 and 15 feet. Oxygen stopped at 25 feet. Residents were urged to reduce phosphorus from fertilizer runoff and from septic seepage and told that a reduction in phosphorus loading would return Birch Lake to Oligotrophic (top quality).

Birch Lake did return to Oligotrophic because of the septic system program.

Oxygen now stops at 90 feet. Today's Secchi Disk Transparency: Between 31 and 32 feet.

Cass County Health Department Birch Lake Monitoring Program (BLMP)

1984 to 1994 a total of 1,015 surface water samples were taken at sampling site locations around the lake and stream on a consistent and regular basis and mailed to the MI State Department of Public Health. ***Thank you monitors - you know who you are and what you did for your lake.*** In 1995 the Department of Environmental Quality did bacteriological tests: Birch Lake is free of bacteria from sewage. BLMP is On-going: The lake and stream are monitored for bacteria. We monitor for pastured hogs in the watershed. We monitor agriculture in our watershed. We monitor the Weir Dam so that the level established by the State of MI in 1927 is not altered.

Cass County Health Department Birch Lake Survey Program

1984-1994 Collected detailed data clearly identifies and pinpoints the pollution source as a residential sewage pollution problem. Cass County Health Department records document the inspection of each of the 181 lake-front properties' sewage disposal system and the correction of 96 faulty septic systems that were contributing bacteria and/or phosphorus to Birch Lake. It has been estimated that the cost of the program was a nearly million dollars. The program was unique in the State of Michigan and the residents of Birch Lake were and are special. Birch Lake property owners maintain their septic systems with a pump every year or two. Some that were cleared have been replaced because of remodeling or new construction inadequacy which raises the cost of the program at a lake that cannot be measured in money, but in pristine beauty.

Birch Lake residents are to be complimented on a job well done.

In a recent note from Dr. Kevern, he says, ***"I enjoyed talking with you about Birch Lake at the conference. I learned a lot about how much a concerned and determined Riparian can do. Birch Lake is now an excellent lake, but always be vigilant."***

-G. Temple

P.S. If you fertilize, Bob Temple has some BLYC no-phosphorus fertilizer for you.

And the beat goes on

When we rebuilt our house on the East shore 12 years ago, we decided that a new home deserved to have a new setting, and Shirley Anne called on Pete Thornton, from Elkhart, to help her redesign our yard. Every year since then, Pete's guys have arrived sometime in late May to clean out and replace those plantings that have died or become overgrown, and to put in a fresh blanket of flowers for the summer ahead.

In the early days Pete staffed his crews with college kids on summer vacation, many of them young people enrolled in landscape architecture programs at Purdue or IU. They were unfailingly bright, attractive, personable, and polite, but most of them didn't work half as hard when Pete wasn't around as when he was. About seven years ago, Pete mentioned that because his business had grown significantly, he was having difficulty recruiting enough students and he had filled out some of his slots with newly arrived Mexican laborers. "They don't speak much English, but they seem to be doing all right," he said.

When our springtime crew arrived, it included three big, happy, brash, college students and one small, dark, quiet man who had probably never spent much time at a university. We had a unusually large project for them that year, that included the removal of a couple of tons of stone from a parking area and four flower beds. It was backbreaking work, but it wouldn't have been too bad if the four guys had split it up among them.

However, the crew chief made sure that he and his buddies got the light duty while the Mexican man shoveled and hauled stone, one set of buckets after another, from 8:30 in the morning until he finished at about half past five. For the last 90 minutes of the day

the three younger men stood together talking and smoking cigarettes while their companion moved back and forth in front of them.

The guy doing all the work was named Martine. Unlike his co-workers who were putting in their time until the fall semester, he was (and is) a married man with children. He needed that job. He went at it like a fellow who was accustomed to both working hard and being stuck with companions who did not. I watched him lift the last load of rock into the dump truck and I didn't know if he would make it. His legs trembled as he shouldered the load and his arms seemed too weak for the final push over the top. It took two tries, but he got it done.

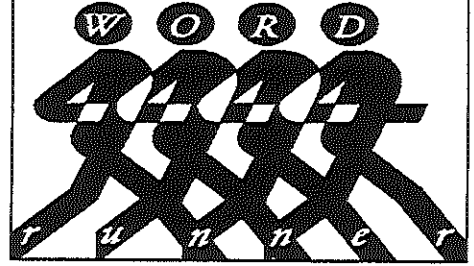
I called Pete the next morning and told him what had happened. "Don't let that Hispanic guy get away," I said. "He's the best you've ever sent us."

Today, most of Pete's landscaping crews are staffed with men who have migrated here from Mexico. Some of them speak English, but many do not. They have little to say, but they all work their butts off. Martine is a Supervisor now. He speaks English to go along with his Spanish, and Pete always sends him to help us start the summer. We look forward to having him here.

It's an old story, it's the American story. The Irish did it. The Italians, and the Poles, and the Jews, and two dozen other ethnic groups came to this country to find a better life, and they did the work no one else wanted to do. They suffered discrimination and endured more hardship than they had coming, but they stuck it out, and they became the first generation of a new strong, proud cadre of Americans.

As a matter of full disclosure I must

By The WordRunner



confess that I have a bias that favors Hispanic people in general, and Mexicans in particular. I love their music and their dancing and their food and their art. I love what Spanish speaking writers do to English when they write in our language rather than theirs. I marvel at the strength of their family bonds and I've never seen anyone work harder than they do.

Nevertheless, I recognize that what I'm really seeing is not a super industrious ethnic group, but rather, the latest wave of new Americans who are determined to change their destiny. Their culture has not yet been assimilated, and their needs are basic and highly specific. Find a job. Get the family back together. Make things better for the kids.

Some day there will be a score or more of Hispanic families on this lake. They'll come here for the same reasons all the rest of us have come, and they'll love and treasure this beautiful spot just like we do. I hope I live to see the first among them arrive so that I can say to a new group of the American middle class families, "Welcome my friend, mi casa, su casa."

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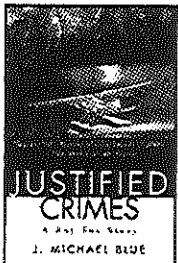
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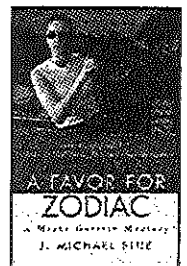
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Ursa Major, the great bear, is high in the north this evening, and rotates to the northwest after midnight. Its most prominent stars form the Big Dipper. The dipper's bowl forms the bear's hindquarters, while the handle forms its tail.

The dipper is positioned handle up these evenings, pouring its contents onto the north shore of the lake. If you line up the two northern most stars, the ones that are farthest away from the handle, then follow them to the right, you'll come to Polaris, the north star. It's served as a cosmic signpost for centuries, pointing out due north for those of us in the northern hemisphere. Many people believe that the North Star is the brightest star, but it's not. More than three dozen other stars are brighter. Polaris

forms the tip of the handle of the Little Dipper, a constellation that's easily hidden by city lights but quite recognizable here at the lake.

Thanks to an effect called precession, Polaris hasn't always marked the north celestial pole in our sky. Earth wobbles on its axis like a spinning top. As it wobbles, the north pole draws a circle on the sky. Over time, then, the pole points at different stars — or no stars at all.

When construction began on the Great Pyramids of ancient Egypt, about 4500 years ago, the star closest to the north celestial pole was Thuban, in the modern constellation Draco, the dragon. Although it wasn't a perfect alignment, Thuban was close enough that it provided a good indicator of

true north.

With the help of Thuban — and perhaps other stars as well — the Egyptians built the pyramids with almost perfect north-south alignments. That's especially true for the first and largest of the pyramids, the Great Pyramid of Khufu. Egyptologists have wondered what tools or markers the builders used to achieve such precise alignment. One astronomer says that in addition to Thuban, they might have used one star in the Big Dipper, and another in the Little Dipper.

As an aside, if you're setting up a new telescope, our latitude/longitude here at the lake is 41.881873, -085.863010. Have a great week, and enjoy the show. It's free.

-Stewart Spratt



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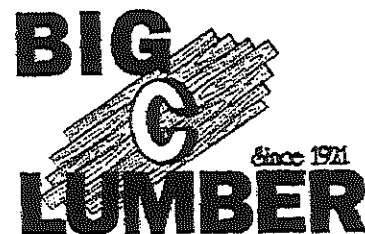
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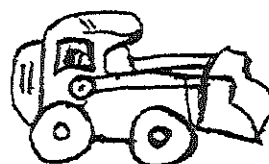


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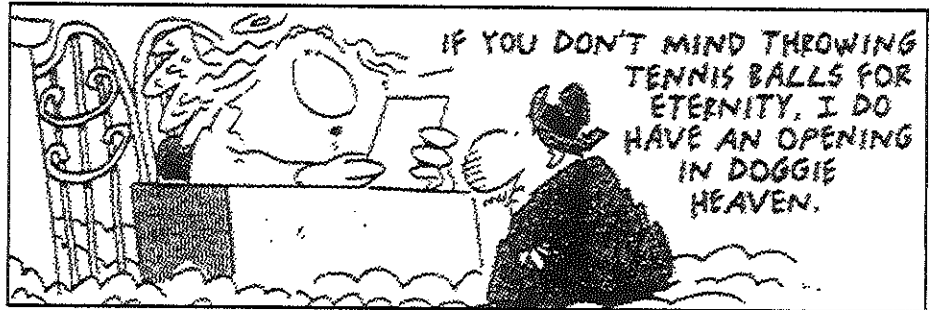
Jeff Bienz (Owner)
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Be responsible — leash your dog!

Yea Fido's Friend is back!

Memorial Weekend was a fast reality to the return of the lake season. Sadly for my Fido and other year-rounders that are blessed with a K9 family member, this means our walks are cut very short due mostly to our summer neighbors that still have trouble following the Michigan leash laws.

My Fido is 12 years old now and is in such good health due largely to her fitness program. Although I hope she makes Guinness World Book of Records as the oldest living dog, odds are not in her favor. You guessed it, I am pulling at your dog loving heart strings. If you leash your dog, my dog and your other neighbors



dogs can continue their healthy fitness program. *Pleeeeeeease.*

Another option to the traditional leash is the electric fence. This allows your dog to roam free and safe in your own yard.

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Have a safe weekend.

-Fido's Friend

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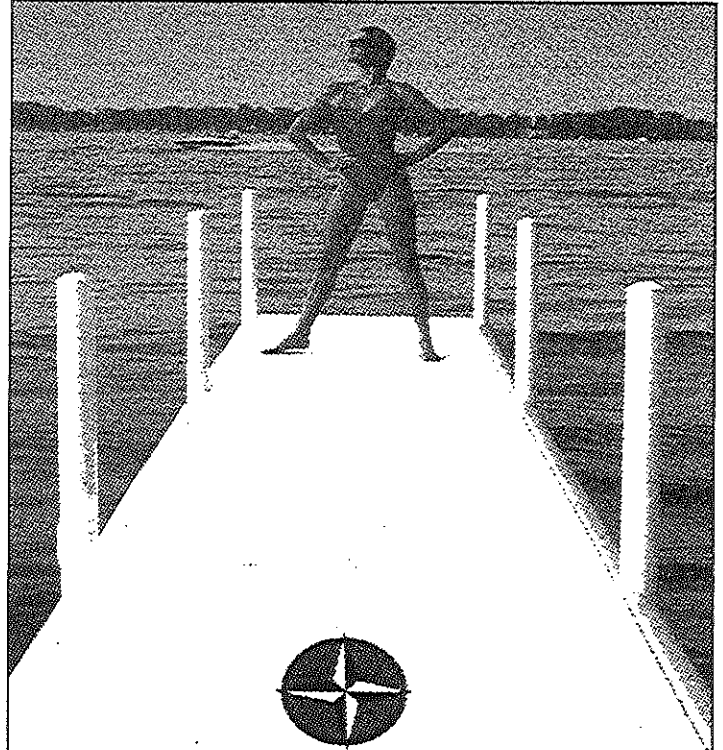


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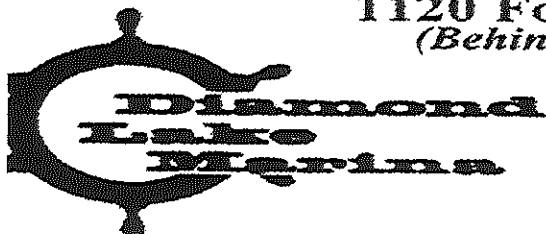
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Birch Lake Yacht Club Membership for 2002 (so far)

Andriano, Fred & Stacie
Asire, Marty
Athanas, Thomas & Martha
Ball, John & Jennifer
Beck, Jim & Sally
Bender, Dick
Benjamin, Ritacarl
Bergan, James & Linda
Blackwood, Howard & Beth
Bliler, William & Grace
Blue, Richard/Krchmar, Sandy
Bolinger, Jim & Debbie
Coan, James
Cramer, Steve (F)
Davis, Dean & Phyllis
DeCocker, Tom & Nancy
Dennert, Larry & Kay
DeYoung, Rich & Beth
DiRutigliano, Dominic & Joyce
Doba, William and Judith
Dugan, Terry & Carol
Eberhart, Gib & Barbara
Eichorst, Doug & Judie
Flora, Larry & Margy (F)

Garcean, Bernie & Blair
Golden, Marc & Eileen
Green, Dick & Barb
Greenig, John & Kay
Groszek, John & Lois
Groszek, John (D)
Harlan, Bruce and Juanita
Harman, Don & Lind
Harris, Gwen
Herms, Bob & Eileen
Hornbeck, Jack & Marianne
Jones, Vic & Leslie
King, Bill, Le & Suzy
King, Bob & Leslie (AD)
Kinner, Dave & Marge
Kolber, Chet & Vivian
Kolber, Chris & Barb
Kruggel, Herm & Bev
LaPierre, Chuck & Cheri
Leach, Norma
McCay, Larry & Deb
McNamee, Kathleen
Miller, Jack & Maray
Monroe, Norm & Nancy

Morrison, Bob
Mullin, Rich & Pam
Olson, Dave & Judy
Olson, Jeff & Beth (F)
Papendria, Sheryl & Covey, Dan
Quinlan, Steve & Vicki
Reynolds, Dan & Janet
Rieth, Bud & Louise
Rogers, Tom & Vicki
Russwurm, Rick & Patti
Santee, Marty & Doris
Scofield, John & Laveta
Stevens, Pat
Thayer, Jim & Elenor
Troeger, Earl & Connie
Troeger, Scott & Holly
Vath, Helen
Vitale, Phil & Sandy
Waddle, Bob & Sue
Waggoner, Monty & Kris
Wagner, Bruce & Sue
Weesner, Keith & Denny
White, Phyllis
Williams, Jerry & Mattie

Williams, Pat & Sue
Wiseman, Terry & Becky
Witchie Ron & Linda
Yoshizawa, Jim & Linda
Zelasko, Millie
Zesinger, Bud & Barb

NOTE:

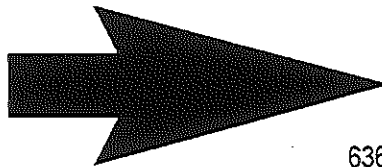
These are the Lakers who have paid their dues to the Birch Lake Yacht Club so far — if your name is incorrectly spelled or if it has been incorrectly omitted, please contact Phil Vitale at 476-1680 or (574) 232-3735 for correction in the next barker.

All members listed have paid their dues and donated for fireworks unless noted as follows: (D)=dues only; (F)=Fireworks only; (AD)=Associate Dues.

If you have not yet paid your dues and wish to do so, see the form printed blow.

Birch Lake Yacht Club Contributions

- \$ ___ - BLYC Member Dues (\$20 / year)
- \$ ___ - BLYC Associate Member Dues (\$10 / year)
- \$ ___ - Homeowners Assoc. (\$10 / year)
- \$ ___ - Sailing Fees (\$15 / year)
- \$ ___ - Building Improvement Fund
- \$ ___ - Fireworks Display Fund
- \$ ___ - Water Quality Program
- \$ ___ - Riparian (\$7/yr, provide address for magazine)
- \$ ___ - Other _____
- \$ _____
- \$ _____



Mail to:

Holly Troeger, Treasurer
1516 Ash Drive East
Elkhart, IN 46514

Drop off at:

63696 Birch Road (call 476-9898)

Make checks payable to:
Birch Lake Yacht Club

Total
\$ _____

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