

The Birch Barker

A Publication for the Members of Birch Lake Yacht Club

Volume Thirteen, August 17, 2002



A week of High Tea and Misdemeanors



COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Dear Birch Lakers,

I can't believe that summer is winding down. The children will be returning to school in the next week or two, and even though our kids are finished and out on their own, more or less, school in session always signals the end of season. I especially hate the shorter days that make it difficult to crawl out of bed in the morning, and the sunset earlier and ear-

lier each evening! Soon we will be watching the leaves turn color and collect in every crack and crevice. It's a good thing they are so beautiful before they come down!

Anyway, the end of the season brings us to the closing events for the Yacht Club. Of course we already had the Corn and Sausage Roast last week. We were disappointed that so many were absent, but those that attended praised the terrific corn as the sweetest ever and the sausage was great. Huge thanks to John Gableman, Lynn Boss and their many helpers setting up, cooking on the hill and working in the kitchen.

Coming up this weekend:

TODAY – Board of Directors Meeting 9 AM - IN

All day is kids day! Tye Dye at 10 AM, pizza and stuff, then the Kid's Regatta at 2 PM at Harman's House.

SUNDAY – Shuffleboard at the Olson's Court 5 PM

* Don't forget to get your reservations in for the Fall Dinner to be held at the Camp on the 24th. It's going to be a LOT OF FUN and the changing of the guard for the Commodore's position. Find out who will become Second-in-Command, the VC!!???? Look for the form elsewhere in the Barker

BIRCH LAKE KIDS DAY

LAST BASH OF THE SUMMER

11AM-1PM (Note time change)
YACHT CLUB FUN FAIR

Moon Walk
Games with Prizes

Tie Dye (bring your own tee, shorts, hats, etc.)

Pizza Party

2PM KIDS REGATTA

Bring any kind of sailboat and meet at the Harman's front yard for a pre-race get together.

Snacks and drinks

Kids Regatta tee shirts for all the kids

and turn it in ASAP! While you're at it, turn in the Directory update so we all know who's who.

That's what's up for now.

See you on the lake and on the shuffleboard court!

-Commodore Jim

BLYC Calendar

- Aug 17BLYC Board Meeting 9 am Yacht Club
- Aug 17Kidz Regatta 2 pm, (see Page 4), Harman's
- Aug 17Kids Event - Tie dye 10 am
- Aug 18Shuffleboard Toumey 5pm
- Aug. 24Homeowners Assn. Annual meeting 10 am
- Aug. 24Fall Dinner 5:30 pm, Camp Tannadoonah (see Page 6)



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@philvital.com by Tuesday 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 by phone, call 476-1680 or (574) 232-3735.

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

Birch Lake Notes

BL Ladies Golf Outing

Five foursomes enjoyed great weather and friendly competition at the Ladies Golf Outing August 9th. Two teams tied at 37. Becky Wiseman, Peggy Cowen, Judy Olson and Pam Mullin collected the 1st Prize money for their efforts. Betsy Custard and her team won dinner at Lindy's. Competition was strong for the individual hole prizes. Lori (Machalleck) Noyer bested the group with the straightest drive on the first hole. Longest drive honors went to

Jeanne Driggs on #7. Becky Wiseman was closest to the pin on #4 while Allison Weaver was closest to the pin on #8. Sincere thanks to all our sponsors and donors for their contributions towards this year's outing: Nancy Walker, Jack Miller, Allison Weaver, Tom's Garage, Mike Machalleck (Claey's Candy), Ted Durham, BLYC Men's Golf Committee, Zeke's and Lindy's. A good time was had by all.

-Mardy and Betsy

News from the Cove

By Sunny Waters
She who enlightens your souls and intellect

Three large cups of hazelnut java and I'm ready to roll. I must issue a warning, however. Close your windows and plug your children's ears. My Mishawaka High School chums will be trekking to Birch Lake for a day of reminiscing and raising cane. We overlook wrinkles, flab and grayish hair for a day to become teeny boppers once again. Whatever happened to my pink poodle skirt?

The corn and sausage roast was great fun and a good way to meet and greet old friends and new ones (sorry about the old).

B.S. has really gone over the edge, as was expected. He has decided to tear up our back yard garden and turn it into a petting zoo of exotic and rare animals for Birch Lake youngsters and adults

who never grew up. He aims for completion late Spring 2003, whereupon this column will be headlined: GNUS FROM THE COVE.

For the uninformed a Gnu is a South African antelope with an ox-like head, curved horns, long tail and a mane.

Thank you for your kind words, Wordrunner. Your check is in the mail. You're no slouch yourself even if you did finish off Carolyn in the last chapter.

Happy Birthday to Rick Doolittle from Rebecca Kabel who isn't sure if she has the correct date.

Gotta run, it's time for my mid-morning strawberry Pop Tart (It doesn't take much to make me happy or hippy).

-Your loving Sunny
who sends you news and cures your blues.

Avoid fruits and nuts.
You are what you eat.

Barker Kids of the Week



Not so long ago, a group posed by the recently painted wall at the Yacht Club. From left are Brad Patello (Bernie & Helen's grandson), Jeff and Todd Olsen, Sherry Holleman with Amber (now in college) and Beth Davis Olsen. Note: the number on the sail is the date the wall was painted, July 25, 1980.

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Birch Lake Notes

A Tale of Two Cities: Chicago and Birch Lake

Chapter 1. The Pioneers. In 1942 Peter and Wanda Winarski bought property on Birch Lake and proceeded to build a home, brick by brick. They came from the Chicago area and settled permanently. When Peter died a number of years later, Wanda and young Pete stayed on.

Chapter 2. 1990. Ben and Vanessa Wozniak (from Chicago) came to visit friends on the lake. They fell in love with Birch Lake and then bought a small cottage on the east side. They gutted it and made it into a charming place with a screened patio.

Chapter 3. 1995. Wanda, in her '80s, decided she could no longer keep up her property. Over the years she had sold lots to friends and relatives, but there was still so much to take care of. Young Peter had long since married and was living with his wife and four children in Battle Creek. She needed to move to the city near her son and family.

Ben and Vanessa were delighted to acquire this from Wanda. Vanessa attacked this new project with a great amount of enthusiasm (and a great

amount of Ben's money). By knocking out walls and raising ceilings, adding a new kitchen, decks and a screened room, she transformed the ordinary brick house into a tasteful showplace. Of course, she wasn't finished. After scouting for just the right furnishings, she then tackled the outside. Besides paint, shutters, and flowerboxes she created a "cottage" garden where passers-by can always see something in bloom.

Chapter 4. Friends. Next came the Wozniak's city friends for weekend visits. They, too, fell in love with THE lake. So Stan and Doreen Wos, with children Christina and Eric, bought the house on the north side of the public landing. This year the Jankowski cottage was sold to Sam and Vicki Tomaina (friends of Wozniaks and Wos') and their children Lauren and Nicole.

These purchases are good in two ways. They have their own homes and don't have to drop hints or wait to be invited for a visit; and Vanessa doesn't have the extra towels and sheets to launder and meals to cook. What a deal!

Chapter 5. More people.

The latest newcomers (NOT previously known to the above couples) landed here by way of Manhattan Beach, California. They are Gordon and Michelle Seyfarth. BUT, when Nina Frurit, nee Sanders, stopped to talk to them while walking her dog, it was discovered that she and Gordon graduated in the same high school class in South Holland, Illinois. Since it was such a large class, they weren't

acquainted. Small world.

Epilogue — The whole premise of the piece is that I now count 29 families on Birch Lake who are either presently Chicago residents, or were former Chicagoans now living here. They just keep coming when they find out what a paradise this is and that it's only a 2 hour drive from Chicago.

-Phyllis Davis



Shuffleboard tournament

The first-ever Birch Lake Shuffleboard Tournament will be held on Sunday, August 18 at 5 pm.

Vicious competition (especially from those who go to Florida!) will take place at the Olson/Jones Court, 63486 Birch Road.

Bring a snack, your favorite beverage and be prepared to win or cheer others on to victory!
-Judy Olson

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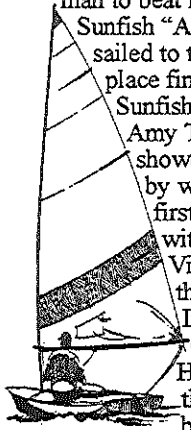
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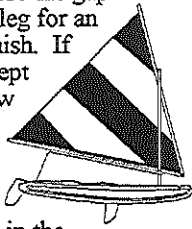
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BLYC Sailing News

Last Sunday Tom Howard showed once again that he is the man to beat in the Sunfish "A" Fleet as he sailed to three 1st place finishes. In the Sunfish "B" Fleet Amy Troeger showed the way by winning the first two races with Sandy Vitale winning the third race. In the MC Class Don Harman won the first race by beating Scott Troeger by just a few feet. The second race was all Scott's as he sailed away from the field to capture the victory. Scott also won the third race as he enjoyed a big lead for most of the race only to see Rick



Harman close the gap on the last leg for an exciting finish. If Rick had kept his ace crew of Lauren Rosswurm and Abby Rondot that he had in the first two races he might have caught Scott. In the Hobie Cat Division Doug Weaver was the only one to bring a boat out. Doug sailed the first two races before retiring to the south shore.



Don't forget, today is the Kidz Regatta, bring a kid and any kind of sailboat and meet at our (Harman) front yard at 2 p.m. Indiana time.

-Don Harman, Fleet Captain

Season standings

Sailor	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Average	Place
MC's					
H. Cranmer	3	3	DNS	1537	2 nd
D. Harman	1	2	3	1518	3 rd
R. Harman	5	4	2	1484	4 th
S. Troeger	2	1	1	1543	1 st
P. Vitale	4	5	4	1391	5 th
Sunfish "A"					
J. Bolinger	4	3	5	1418	4 th
T. Howard	1	1	1	1590	1 st
D. Olson	3	5	2	1420	3 rd
R. Rosswurm	5	4	3	1351	6 th
D. Weaver	2	2	4	1387	5 th
Bob King	DNS	DNS	DNS	1455	2 nd
Sunfish "B"					
J. Meyer	DNS	3	5 th	1547	3 rd
S. Vitale	2	2	1	1532	4 th
C. Plaia	DNS	DNS	DNS	1584	1 st
A. Troeger	1	1	DNS	1571	2 nd
"CATS"					
B. King	DNS	DNS	DNS	1545	2 nd
D. Weaver	1	1	DNS	1588	1 st
M. Kelly	DNS	DNS	DNS	1542	3 rd

Kidz Regatta — 2 pm today!

Kids who don't have an adult sailor still have a chance to participate in the Kidz Regatta. Just show up at the Harman's house this afternoon with your PFD (life jacket) and tell 'em you're interested in sailing — and we'll do our best to find you a responsible adult to sail with.

Adults: We are expecting a good turn out of kids, so if you have a sailboat sitting around that hardly ever gets into the water, bring it over on Saturday

Come Sail with us!
Next Races:
 Sunday, August 18 — 11 a.m. (or 1 p.m.)

Don't Forget the Kidz Regatta
 today, Saturday, Aug. 17, 2 p.m.

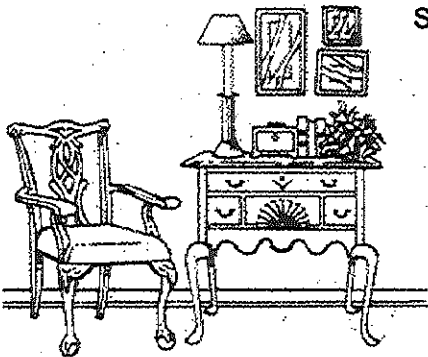
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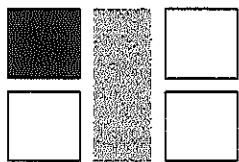
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We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer at Birch Lake!

-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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RED HATS AND PURPLE DRESSES



Red Hot Ladies' Tea

On August 7, the Yacht Club was transformed into a summer garden with a multitude of flowers surrounding the room. The garden quickly turned into a sea of purple and red as 64 ladies filled the room in beautiful hats and dresses. The newly painted north wall with its French door view of the lake could not of been a better backdrop!

Ladies enjoyed sharing stories as they sat and sipped tea and lemonade and tried the assorted treats from cheese rolls to cheesecakes.

There were so many wonderfully decorated hats! It was hard choosing who would be the winners but the following ladies were awarded prizes for having the best hats: Helen Toth, Marty Ball, Louise Reith and Debbie Bolinger.

The fashion show was terrific! The Alternate Shop in Dowagiac provided the outfits for our lovely models. Who would believe that most of the outfits were from a second hand store!

Thanks to MaryAnn O'Neil, Helen Toth and Denny Weesner, the best women in the world to work with! You ladies are so talented and hard working.

Many hands made this event possible, thank you all for your help; we couldn't of done this with out you! Our terrific models: Debbie Bolinger, Bev Kruggel, Juanita Harlan, Betty O'Brien and Holly Troeger. To all who worked on clean up including Helen Toth's lovely daughters: Ann, Terry and Paula. Special thanks go to Amanda Lacey and Amy Troeger for giving up their afternoon to be our servers.

Till next year,

-Darlene Troyer



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Come dance at the Fall Dinner

The annual Fall Dinner for the Birch Lake Yacht Club will be August 24, beginning at 5:30 pm (Ind. time) in the dining hall of Camp Tannadoonah. This year the event will be highlighted by old-fashioned square dancing and new-fashioned line dancing.

The dinner will be buffet-style, with chicken and roast beef, potato salad, cole slaw, bake beans, green beans and a dinner roll (and, of course, your favorite beverages).

Also included during the evening will be a short, end-of-the-year Board meeting, election of new board members, the passing of the Commodore's gavel, and the introduction of the new Vice Commodore.

Register now by filling out the form at the right and dropping it off with your check for \$15/person at Vitales', 63174 Birch Rd. on the East Shore (just North of Zesingers). Registrations must be received by August 20.

BLYC Fall Dinner Registration

We will be attending the fall dinner on Aug. 24

Name: _____

No. attending: _____ @ \$15 each = \$ _____

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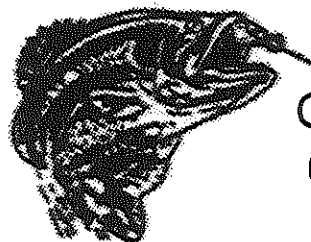
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	Worship Hour	10:45 am
	Evening Service	6:00 pm

Wednesday:	Adult	7:30 pm
	Youth	7:30 pm
	Kid's Club	7:30 pm

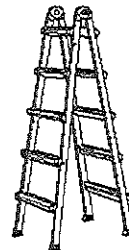
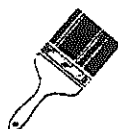
Come worship with us

Mark The Painter

Greetings Birch Lake Campers! Do you need, want or desire a quality painter this summer?

Does your home or cottage have a need for some fixing up? I am now booking jobs for the summer of 2002...dates will go fast.

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Birch Lake Directory Project

It's time to make a new Birch Lake Directory! With your help, we will be able to publish a new one and distribute it in the Spring of next year.

Beginning this week, we will start collecting names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses for as many of our neighbors as we can possibly find.

We need your help!

Please take a look at the current directory, note whatever changes need to be made and get them to me as soon as you can

so I can start compiling the information and get the new directory ready to print (see Page 1 for address, etc.).

You can use the form at the right — or make up your own, as long as we get all of the correct new info that you want your neighbors to have.

Anyone interested in advertising in the directory or having a listing in the Directory Yellow Pages should contact Phil Vitale or Bob King.

Anyone who can help on the project should call 476-1680.

BLYC Directory Project

Names _____
 Children _____
 Lake Address _____ Cottage # _____
 Lake Phone _____
 Off Lake Address _____

 Off Lake Phone _____
 e-mail address _____
 Other Misc. _____

Lloyd Vaughn
Owner



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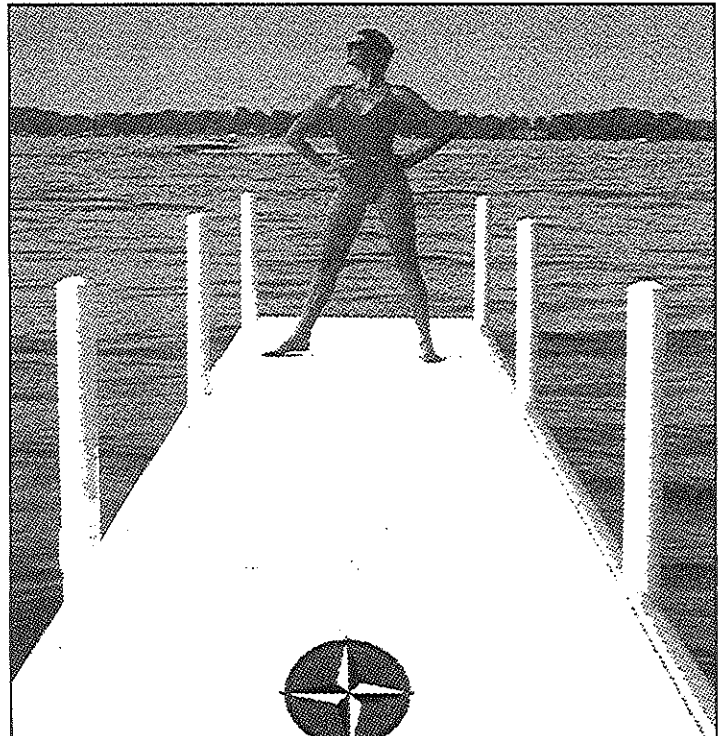

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How does BIRCH LAKE stack up?

Several lakes in Cass County participate in the Michigan Lake and Stream Associations' Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program. The 2001 results of the three parameters that were measured give an evaluation of each lake's water quality. As you can see, **Birch Lake is rated high quality in each test**, unlike any other lake in the program.

A **high quality** lake, like **Birch**, is deep, and clear and clean, with aquatic plant growth that is native, healthy and diverse. Dissolved oxygen is substantial in the cold, deep-bottom water of **Birch Lake**, and levels remain high into mid-summer. A **middle quality** lake is devoid of oxygen in late summer and exhibits nuisance algae and weed growth. A **poor quality** lake is weedy, with frequent algae blooms. Dissolved oxygen levels drop to near zero in the spring.

Secchi Disk Transparency — a measure of water clarity in feet

Lake	Number of Readings	Range		Mean	Water Quality Index
		Min.	Max.		
Baldwin 1	14	7.1	14.5	10.4	Middle
Baldwin 2	14	7.3	14.3	10.6	Middle
Baldwin 3	14	8.4	17.0	11.6	Middle
Baldwin 4	14	7.8	15.8	11.0	Middle
Big Twin No.	16	9.5	20.0	13.2	Middle
Birch	18	12.0	29.0	19.1	High
Christiana	14	5.5	16.0	8.3	Middle
Diamond	18	5.0	18.0	10.6	Middle
Donnell	10	5.0	14.0	9.1	Middle
Indiana	18	5.5	19.5	13.6	Middle
Juno	14	5.5	13.0	7.4	Middle
Little Twin	10	8.6	13.9	10.8	Middle
Painter	14	4.5	7.5	5.7	Poor
Puterbaugh 1	16	8.5	14.5	10.9	Middle
Puterbaugh 2	16	8.5	14.5	11.0	Middle
Puterbaugh 3	16	8.5	14.5	11.0	Middle

Total Phosphorus (ug/l) — used to predict the level of algae

Lake	Spring Overtum		Late Summer		Water Quality Index
	Volunteer	DEQ	Volunteer	DEQ	
Baldwin	5	-	11	-	Middle
Birch	9	-	7	-	High
Christiana	25	-	16	-	Middle
Dewey	18	-	No Sample	-	No Rating
Diamond	8	11	7	5	High
Donnell	1	-	No Sample	-	No Rating
Juno	40	-	19	-	Middle
No. Twin	9	9	7	9	High
Painter	25	-	44	-	Poor
So. Twin	6	10	6	9	High

Chlorophyll — relative amount of algae is estimated by measuring chlorophyll

Lake	Sampling Event					Mean	Water Quality Index
	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.		
Birch	5	2	2	2	3	2.8	High
Diamond	3	1	2	5	5	3.2	Middle
Juno	2	6	5	11	7	6.2	Middle
No. Twin	1	6	4	3	2	3.2	Middle
Painter	12	7	13	29	35	19	Poor
So. Twin	3	3	-	1	1	2	High

Wedding Summers

This is a wedding summer for us. Where we are concerned, weddings always seem to come in bunches. We've been invited to three this season, but contrary to our usual behavior, we're only going to attend one of the three. As we gracefully age, we find ourselves less inclined to turn our world upside down to accommodate the schedules of our relatives and friends.

The first invitation came from a fellow named Jim whom I met during my years in business. He's a guy twenty-three years my junior, who became a good friend to both Shirley Anne and me, and with whom we have spent many happy times. He's a handsome giant who once performed as a goalie on a U.S. Olympic Soccer team, and he also enjoyed a brief pro football career on the roster of the New York Jets. We have not met his intended.

We made it to Jim's first wedding about ten years ago in Los Angeles. His bride at that time was a tall, beautiful, young prosecuting attorney named Karen (She was working on the O.J. Simpson case at the time) whose flaming red hair and statuesque figure helped her be even prettier than her husband on their wedding day. The ceremony took place beside the swimming pool at The St. James Club in the Hollywood hills, and except for Bob Shapiro and his wife (he was one of O.J.'s defense lawyers), I believe Shirley Anne and I were the two

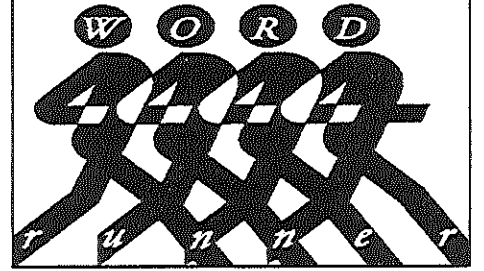
shortest, smallest people in attendance. The highlight, or lowlight of the reception, depending on your point of view, was the total explosion of a zipper that ran the length of a stunning young woman's strapless cocktail dress. She was dancing the night away when her entire ensemble came unstuck, making it necessary for her to boogie off the dance floor in nothing but a pair of sheer pantyhose and two very spiky high heeled shoes.

This time around, Jim made the wedding the kickoff event in a three day celebration, all of which took place in the Sonoma valley wine country, in Northern California. It would have been fun, but a July 3rd to 6th affair would have taken us away at the one time when our entire family had made plans to be here at the lake. Besides, I doubted that anyone was going to top the trick with the strapless dress.

I have a niece who plans to be wed in Austin, Texas on August 24th. I'm certain it will be a glorious day, but the 25th will be our 40th wedding anniversary, and we aren't going to sacrifice our private celebration, even to share someone else's joy. We'll have to catch up with her and her handsome husband-to-be sometime later.

It's the third wedding that we'll be attending. We're going to Chicago on the weekend that this column appears in the Barker. Once again our connection is to the groom, a 40ish bachelor whom I met

By The wordrunner



through business associates. During the past five years he's become so close to both of us that he is like a member of the family. However, he is also a man of fixed habits and behaviors, a man set in his ways, sort of an African American Henry Higgins, whom I thought would probably never let a woman in his life.

He's been very nervous during the past several weeks, and he's quick to admit that he's approaching the altar with fear and trepidation. It should make for an interesting afternoon and evening.

Weddings are wonderful. They are at or near the top of my list of favorite celebrations. I just wish that all of our friends would get together and do a little planning, so that we could spread these moments of joy more evenly over the course of each year. If any of you have figured out a way to make that happen, please let me know. I'd appreciate the help.

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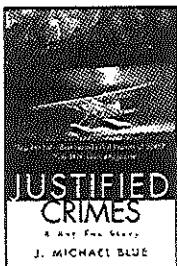
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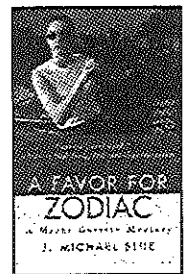
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Stu's Star Stuff



My two favorite constellations, or "asterisms" as we scientists call them, put on a great show in the southern sky each evening this time of year. I like them because their shapes are particularly recognizable.

Reddish-orange Antares, the brightest star in the constellation Scorpius, stands to the right, about 18 degrees (less than two fists held at arm's length) and a bit lower than the Moon about an hour after sunset. Although the constellation often is referred to as "Scorpio," the name adopted by astronomers is Scorpius. Antares is the heart of the scorpion. The head and claws extend up and to the west, while the tail curves down toward the water and then

curls up. The spot the moon occupies is in the vicinity of the direction to the center of the Milky Way galaxy. The core of the Milky Way lies about 27,000 light-years away. It is hidden from view behind clouds of interstellar dust.

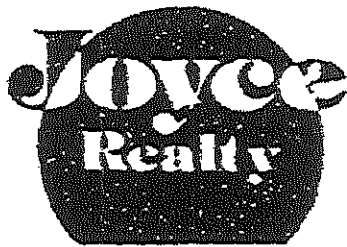
Tomorrow night the moon moves from above the spout to near the "handle" of the "teapot" shape of Sagittarius. In the early evening notice the 2nd-magnitude star Nunki two moon diameters to the lower left. As the night progresses the Moon passes very close to the star for observers in most the of U.S. (The minimum separation for Michigan skywatchers occurs about 1 a.m. EDT.) Folks in western Canada and near the northwestern U.S. boundary will see the

Moon pass in front of the star, blocking it from view for a period of time.

The teapot represents only a portion of the constellation Sagittarius. A bit more imagination is required to see the archer shooting his arrows toward the heart of the scorpion.

Look for Scorpius and the teapot above the south shore tonight when you're out enjoying show. Use your imagination to watch the steam from the Milky Way pour from the teapot's spout. The rest of the show is free too.

-Stewart Spratt



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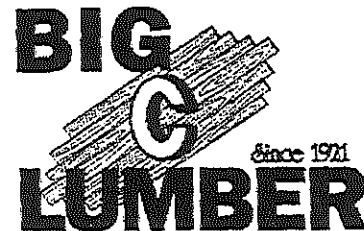
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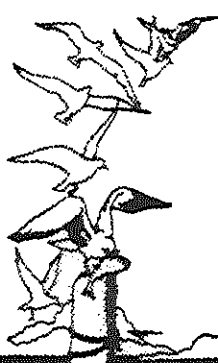
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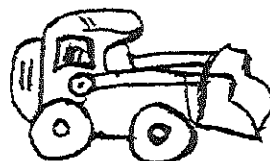


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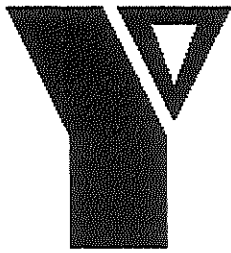
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The Eberhart camping tradition dates back to 1909. In the summer of 1909, twenty boys from the South Bend YMCA, including Harris Huribut Eberhart, camped in tents at Corey Lake. Harris left camp before the end of summer to take a friend home for a visit. On July 24, Harris & his friend were killed in an auto/train accident. A map was found among Harris' belongings depicting how he would like camp to look. In September of 1909, the Eberhart family donated money to purchase land & outfit the camp in memory of their son. The camp was officially dedicated on July 4, 1910.

The 2002 camp season ends 08/17/02 - make camper reservations early as openings get tight by spring each year!

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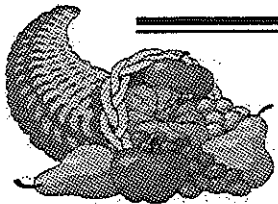
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Balsamic Tuna

4 Tuna steaks
1 Tlbs olive oil
1/2 sweet onion, diced
1 garlic clove, minced
2 plum tomatoes, diced
2 Tlbs orange marmalade
4 Tlbs balsamic vinegar

Preheat oven to 375. Bake tuna steaks for 6 to 8 minutes. Meanwhile, heat oil to medium-high in skillet. Saute onion and garlic. Add tomatoes. Stir in marmalade and vinegar.

Serve salsa over tuna. Serves 4

Fresh Fruit Pie (Blueberry or Peach)

Crust: 1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup oil
2-3 Tlbs sugar

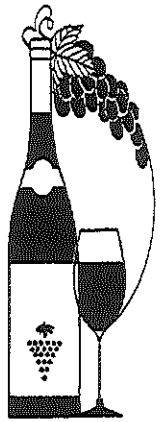
2 Tlbs milk

Mix all together, and press into pie plate and up sides of plate. Poke crust with a fork and bake at 450 for 10-12 minutes (until light brown).

Filling:

1 3oz pkg jello (same flavor as fruit)
1 cup sugar
3 1/2 Tlbs cornstarch
1 1/2 cups boiling water

Mix jello, sugar, cornstarch, and water in saucepan. Cook until thick and clear. Let cool. (quick cool by setting pan in cold water). After cooled, add 4-6 cups of fresh fruit, mix well, and pour into crust and refrigerate at least 2 hrs to set. Top with Cool Whip.



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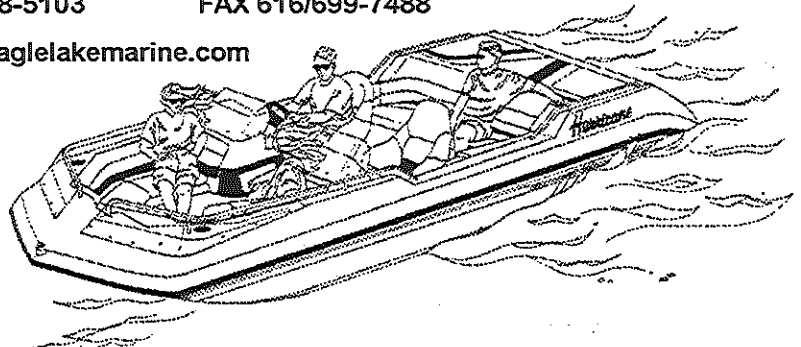
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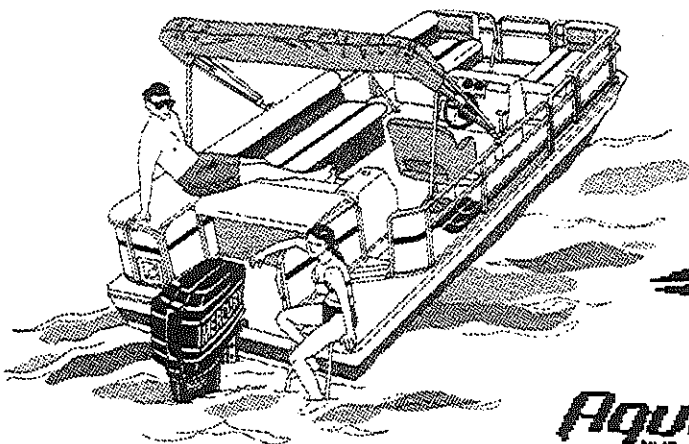
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Opinion ~ Forum

PRESERVE and PROTECT

PRESERVE and PROTECT

I read with great interest, the letter written by my good friend Dan Reynolds regarding the potential of sewers at Birch Lake and his studied rationale of why they are not necessary today. I agree with everything he wrote and everything that Mr. Anthony Groves, M.S. wrote in his supporting letter to Gert Temple. However, I don't believe Dan's conclusion ... that the lake and the properties around the lake won't be in need of sewers for another 20 years, is necessarily true. I think we are seeing signs that sewers or a new septic system initiative could be needed now.

HISTORY. The work that was done in the '80s through the leadership Gert Temple, Dan Reynolds and their dedicated committee did make a difference in the quality of the lake water. At that time sewers were not a viable option. The only option was to upgrade our septic systems. Those upgraded septic systems are now 12 to 18 years old. Based upon my experience, and as a result of talking to several Health Departments in the region, the average useful life of a septic system in good soil under ideal circumstances is 12 to 15 years. Many of the systems around the Lake are situated in less than good soils. As any of you who have had the opportunity or the necessity to change your septic system in the last several years know, the codes, requirements and costs for a septic system today are significantly different than 12 or 15 years ago. Based upon information from two Septic installation companies and two home builders, replacement septic system costs range from \$4,500-\$12,000 with mound systems costing 2 to 2-½ times the cost of conventional systems. These estimates will vary depending upon the ease of access for excavation equipment, size of home, and Health Department requirements.

FUTURE. We need to press forward with this sewer opportunity for many reasons: 1) As real estate values continue to rise on Birch Lake, those who buy are going to naturally want to improve their properties commensurate with their investment (ie, Another bedroom and/or bath, etc.). Also, the new owners will most probably increase the usage of the properties over the previous owners. Some may even convert to year-around homes, causing additional and continual stress on individual septic systems. Septic systems cause a lack of flexibility in what can be done with an existing property, either through remodeling, or tear down and rebuild. 2) The spike in ammonium nitrogen recently being discovered in some of our wells may be the result of too many septic systems in close proximity to one another. According to the St. Joseph County Health Department Ammonium Nitrogen is a by-product of waste water treatment. It is NOT the only source, but it is one of them.

TIMING. It is my understanding that this

proposal requires a good amount of support from the property owners at Birch Lake, Shavehead Lake, the Village of Union, Baldwin, Long, Coverdale and Indiana Lakes in order to create the number of home sites necessary to make the costs as low as has been projected. Therefore, it requires all of our participation and cooperation to make this project a reality.

If we choose not to go forward with this opportunity and demonstrate a lack of support, we are taking a leadership position to see the project fail. If at some point in time in the future, near or far, sewers become a requirement, this option may not even exist. Based upon the fact that in 1992 Diamond Lake installed sewers at the tune of about \$4,500 per household, and in 1998 and 1999 Donnell Lakes average installation was \$7,500, and our anticipated costs are in the neighborhood of \$11,000, installation costs at a time in the future, should the opportunity exist, will be significantly higher than they are today. Also, the municipal bond market today is 4%-5% and represents perhaps the lowest interest rate in 25-30 years further benefiting a positive decision today.

SEPTIC SAFETY. In most neighboring communities ordinances are in place that prohibits the construction of a residence, requiring well and septic, on a lot less than 15,000 square feet. A 15,000 square foot property would be a 100' x 150' typically. The effective average lot size at Birch Lake is 56' X 130' or 7,280 square feet. Less than ½ that minimum. Those same communities, having experienced significant drinking water quality problems in developments served by septic systems, are in the process of modifying those ordinances to require 30,000 to 44,000 square feet of lot area in order to safely accommodate a private well and septic. The reasons for these ordinances are obvious in that private septic systems in high density cause ground water pollution to the point where the drinking water fails to meet safe guidelines. (This could be happening to us now.) These changes to such ordinances are commonplace throughout the country. The density of septic systems on a majority of the Lake DO NOT meet any of today's minimum health standards. The more we use them, the faster they will fail. It is not a matter of IF they will fail; it is a matter of WHEN.

BLUE, COOL and CLEAR. While our lake water at this point in time is not suffering, there is no guarantee that with increased uses on these existing private septic systems that our present condition will continue. In fact the reports of high Ammonium Nitrates in some of our well water may indicate the beginning of high density septic systems effect on the groundwater. Now is the time to preventively move forward causing and keeping our lake at its best condition. Waiting for the private septic system to fail, and our Lake water quality to show signs of deterioration, is not the appropriate time to

cure the issue. Now is the time to act preventively for the health and safety of maybe not my generation, but the generations to come. **SEWERS ARE NOT JUST FOR POLLUTED LAKES ... THEY PREVENT LAKES FROM POLLUTION**

SEWER CONSTRUCTION HAZARDS.

There is no doubt that the installation of a sewer system at our Lake will be a total inconvenience and a total mess, but no more so than at other lake communities. The ecological disruption or phosphorus runoff simply did not occur. There is more risk for dangerous run off from the process required in the replacement of existing septic systems. Yes, there are risks in the construction of a sewer system, but those risks have been managed successfully in all area projects to date. In addition, the short inconvenience is far outweighed by the long-term benefits.

THE INVESTMENT. I really think that the largest impediment to acceptance of sewers at Birch Lake deals with the cost to each and every one of us to implement this project. The costs are real and they are relatively salty. Believe it or not I have no interest in spending \$12,000+ to have my property hooked up to a sewer system. I am fortunate in that I have enough ground to replace my septic system many times over without endangering the quality of ground water of any of my neighbors. But I also understand the long-term benefits of a sewer system, not only to the ecology of Birch Lake, but also the financial impact it has on property value. Every community that has implemented sewers has recovered their investment shortly in increased property values. We have been blessed with an appreciation rate here at Birch Lake fundamentally because of our incredibly blue, clear, cool lake. That appreciation will cease to keep up with the surrounding areas if in fact septic systems become an issue again and the remedy for the septic problem is not available. When we invest the kinds of money that we have invested, each one of us in our properties on Birch Lake, we must do what is best to protect that investment. Our properties are a significant investment and are most probably a significant part of our wealth. At a time when alternative investments are faltering, real estate continues to perform well and remains a good solid investment for each and every one of us. This sewer option further insures your investment is protected, as well as the lake quality. If sewers are possible at Birch Lake under this proposal, they will be as affordable today as they ever will be in the future. Remember, PROACTIVE remedies are always less expensive than REACTIVE remedies.

BACK LOT DEVELOPMENT. Porter Township has in effect an ordinance, which prohibits key holing or back lot development with limited lake access. An example of

Continued on next Page

SPECIAL NOTICE

The issue of waste water treatment and a potential Birch Lake sewer system has generated considerable interest and controversy over the past few weeks.

Several requests have been received from Lakers to publish information and individual letters of opinion. While officers and board of directors of the Birch Lake Yacht Club, and the editor of the Barker WILL NOT ENDORSE ANY opinion

on the issue, the Baker will publish opinion letters that meet the following stipulations:

- All letters must be signed and the writers must allow their names to be published with the article.
- Letters must be submitted by deadlines listed.
- All letters must be submitted via e-mail, or on computer disk in a text format.
- All letters must be no more than 500 words; if letters are over 500 words, they will only be published on an available time/space basis, and pro-

viding the author agrees to cover all additional costs incurred because of the letter.

DEADLINE FOR THIS WEEK

Deadline for all items submitted to the Birch Barker this week is Noon on TUESDAY, AUGUST 20
SORRY, NO EXCEPTIONS OR EXTENSIONS CAN BE GRANTED

Opinion ~ Forum

Continued from previous page

Key holing is a 15-lot, off-lake subdivision having the right to jointly use one lot on the lake to access the lake. That style of subdivision development is prohibited. We have currently a couple of key holing exceptions, which are part of our community today. Those obviously would be grandfathered and would be allowed. The demand for back lot development in and around Birch Lake in Vandalia, Michigan without lake access is minimal to none. So please, do not make your decision predicated on a fear that this sewer development will promote high density off lake development. Based upon historic and current market data, off lake development without lake access does not have a realistic chance of success.

CAMP TANNADOONAH. The proposed sewer project's effect on the financial health

of Camp Tannadoonah is my most serious concern. Knowing that the financial life of a girls and/or boys camp is year-to-year and month-to-month, and that any excessive forced expense can spell their demise, a satisfactory solution for Camp is a necessity. I know first hand having spent 40 years associated with Camp Eberhart at Corey Lake that the maintenance, repair and replacement of septic systems is a constant challenge. Sewers for Camp Tannadoonah would be a blessing if they could be affordable. There may be grants or funding programs available for not-for-profits organizations to help offset this expense, however it is my understanding that a financial plan has been negotiated with the Township relative to Camp that is significantly more affordable than the formula provides. This is my No. 1 concern. Should Camp Tannadoonah be provided with a plan that works within their financial constraints, then I think we have an opportu-

nity that can only benefit everybody.

CONCLUSION. After you read Dan's article and the supporting letter from Anthony Groves, you recognize one indisputable fact, ... it is not a matter of *if* we need sewers, it is a matter of *when*. I think that that the Sewer Project is an OPPORTUNITY, not an imposition!! We should be leading our neighboring communities to ACCEPT this proposal, not lead them to support its demise.

After all we have the most to lose ... We are privileged to live on the most beautiful lake in Michigan, and we need to PRESERVE and PROTECT its future.

Thank you,

-Rick Doolittle
Cottage #353
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Losing Ourselves and Saving The Lake

I remember when I could look over the edge of my sailboat and not be able to see the bottom of the lake in five feet of water. I remember walking onto the pier at my in-law's cottage in the Cove to get a closer look at a wide expanse of scummy, foul smelling, oily, waste that had washed up on the West Shore.

There were many days when a soapy foam of greasy contaminants, pushed eastward by strong winds, clung to our seawall and coated rocks along the shoreline. We didn't know what it was, or where it came from, but we knew it didn't belong here.

I remember when more than one homeowner thought it was okay to empty septic waste directly into the lake or into one of the bodies of water that connect to the lake. They did it quietly, when they probably thought no one would notice, but each of them did it more than once.

There was a time when a neighboring farm field that drained directly into Birch, housed hundreds of pigs. The pigs did what pigs do, and most of it ended up in the lake water. Also, many neighboring farmers placed raw sewage on top of their fields, rather than "injecting" it into the soil to guard against lake contamination. They probably meant no harm, but harm resulted from their carelessness.

The reason I bring those things up today is that none of them would have changed had it not been for the tireless, patient, dogged, work of a very small group of people, led by Gert Temple and Dan Reynolds. Nobody could have given the two of them or those who assisted them, adequate compensation or reward for the work they did, and the changes they brought about. Yet they did it all for the love of the lake, and we owe them great respect and admiration.

It took a decade to identify all of the septic systems that were polluting the lake and to get them replaced. Identification was the easy part. Persuading the folks who had the problems to do something about those problems is what ate up the years. In the end, a very few had to be taken to the brink of legal action before they would bring their systems into compliance with the law.

I used to carp at Dan Reynolds that it was ridiculous to go on year after year making such slow progress, when the need for

change was so great. "The law is on our side," I would say. "Let's use it."

"It's better to go slow," Dan would say to me. "We're all neighbors here. We all have to live together long after we put this behind us."

Those are good words for us to remember today. The sewer proposal is a significant issue. There are risks to us and to our lake, regardless of which course of action we choose, and the dollars involved could dig a hole in anyone's savings. Some see the coming of sewers as the end of the traditional Birch Lake lifestyle and the beginning of condo mania. Others believe we are being barbaric when we flush our toilets into the soil from which we obtain our drinking water.

Feelings are running high. I'm not interested in proselytizing, but there are a few things about the current debate that are bothering me.

I heard an assertion, repeated more than once during the past two weeks, that the current flurry of activity to test drinking water for nitrates, was instigated by Nancy Walker because she is a Real Estate agent and "she wants to scare everyone into voting for sewers, so she can bring condo development to Birch." What nonsense! Anyone who believes that Nancy would do anything that might damage this lake, just so that she could make more money, doesn't know Nancy Walker at all.

A letter appeared in the Barker that suggested that some unnamed parties were "lobbying" to get Birch and Shavehead Lakes "included" in sewer development to help bail Baldwin, Long, and Indiana lakes out of their "serious sewer problems." "The more lake homes hooking up to the proposed system the less the cost per home," the letter writer suggested. There's no question that Baldwin, Long, and Indiana lakes need sewers, but anyone who has looked at the proposed sewer project would know that those three lakes will pay less per household, if Birch and Shavehead stay out of the mix than if we go in with them.

Another piece of gossip holds that "the only reason that the water quality committee people are opposed to sewers is because they won't have anything to do once sewers are installed." If so, they must be masochists, because I can't imagine anyone

wishing for more of what they have endured over the past fifteen years. I know I never want to see us go through another round of "cleaning up."

I've been told that "those who are pushing for sewers are doing it because they want to 'cash in' when property values rise." According to this theory, Dean Davis is "behind the sewer project" because he wants to sell out and move to Florida. Where does this stuff come from? It is hurtful, demeaning, malicious, and it can destroy a neighborhood.

In my experience, those who attack their opponents instead of the arguments their opponent's advance do so, because they lack confidence in their own positions. The arguments in this and every other debate have to stand or fall on their own.

Clearly, you don't need sewers to get condos - there were condos on Diamond Lake long before those folks had sewers. Zoning is a much bigger roadblock to development than the absence of sewers.

On the other hand, a lake as pristine as Birch is not in eminent danger of pollution if we reject a sewer proposal. We have an outstanding water quality committee and we could probably go on for many years before we, or our kids, are forced into making a change. We can pay a high price now or, we or someone else, can pay a higher price later.

As a matter of full disclosure, it is probably worth noting that I favor the sewer project. I have concerns about how it will be done and by whom, and questions about how steep the costs will be, but in the end, I come down on the side of putting in a system as soon as it is practicable to do so.

Whatever we do, however, let's be generous with each other, and to those of you who are angry and bitter about the presence of this issue or the resistance to it, I say, get over it. We need to think this through as a community, and regardless of the position any of us takes on the matter, none of us should be maligned or denigrated by our neighbors. Each of us is a full citizen and a devoted shepherd of this wonderful place, and each of us wants what is best for its future.

-Jim Blue



Cleaning Tips

by Messy Maude

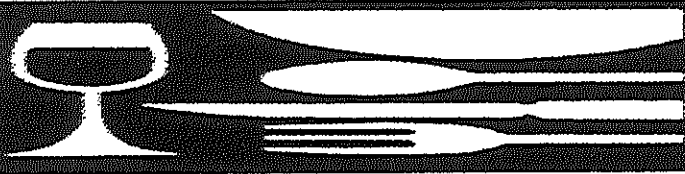
I love fresh cut flowers on the table! The roads around the lake are full of wildflowers throughout the summer and I enjoy bringing some of the outdoors indoors. However, I do not enjoy trying to scrub the brown stains at the bottom of the flower vases a few days later.

Try this lazy trick to clean out that yucky stuff. To remove stains from the bottom of a glass flower vase fill with water and drop in two Alka-Seltzer tablets. Let soak for an hour.

-Maude



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Boat Lift: Shore Master aluminum boat lift. Maximum boat beam is 96 inches. Holds 3600 pounds. Does not have canopy. Has cradle brackets and boat guides. This lift is in very good condition - winch, wheel, cable, boat guides and pulleys all new in last few of years. Take a look - Cowens on the west shore. \$1,000. Call 476-2786 or (352) 753-1187.

For Sale — 5000 BTU GE Window AIR CONDITIONER — 110 volt. 2 months old. \$120. Call 476-2642

For Sale — Computer Desk, solid maple wood 48x27" \$40; Utility Stand on rollers 19"x12"x25" \$10; Bookcase, three shelves, open back 32"x13-1/2"x33" \$8 Call Vicki 476-2383

16' Sea Nymph fishing boat with 40 hp motor (little use), electric start, fish finder, electric anchor, live fish wells, electric trolling motor and Shorelander trailer \$3,750

— also —

24' Riviera Cruiser Pontoon; seat covers, radio, canopy, ice chest, 40 hp motor \$5,900. Call Nagys at 616-476-2612 or 574-522-0995.

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3+ bedrooms. 104' frontage. East side. Call 476-9862 or (574) 272-9221.

Slalom Ski For Sale. Kidder Pro MX 67" Double Boot, Adj. Fin \$190 or best offer. Call Tom at 476-9349.

For Sale: Vagabond 14 sail boat (14-foot daysailer). Call Pat at 476-2578.

Home at 63208 Kinsey St. (Birch Lake): Four bedroom brick ranch w/deeded access. Call Joyce at (616) 476-2370.

SPINET PIANO — Lyon & Healy; plays well. \$400. Call Bob at 476-2293.

Canoe for Sale. 17 ft. Grumman square stern, excellent condition. Also 4 hp Evinrude. 616-471-7647 or 616-921-0710

Fishin Buddy Model 2250 clamp- on fish locator. 3-years old \$200 (firm). 476-2227

Chicago Bears tickets - 2002 games being played in Champaign, Illinois. 4 seats, \$55 each for the following games: Sat Aug 10, 7:05 pm-Denver; Fri Aug 23, 7:05 pm-Jacksonville; Sun Dec 15, noon-NY Jets; Sun Dec 29, 7:30 pm-Tampa. Call Chris at 476-9492 or 847 226-4076.

WANTED TO BUY

Seaworthy sunfish sailboat, ideal-

ly with trailer. Please contact Bob or Stephanie Kennedy at (616) 344-6545, or talk to John or Jody Meyers.

Interested in purchasing a small fishing boat trailer and a 5 or 6 hp outboard. Call Bud at 476-2526.

Wanted to Buy: Small cottage on Birch Lake and/or waterfront lot to build. Long-term interest. Michigan born, raised and schooled. GO BLUE!!! All leads appreciated and considered from any source. Mark and Christine Werkema, Granger, IN (574) 243-9333. e-mail: jet-books@flightline.com

I need a small trailer to move and store my MC sailboat for the winter. Call Phil 476-1680.

FOR RENT

Birch Lake cottage, west side. 616-471-7647 or 616-921-0710

LOST

Mustang Water Ski; probably on east side. If a neighbor recovered it, please call Betty or Joe O'Brien 476-9374. Thanks!

Lost: Cover for cooler on paddle boat. It is blue plastic. Call Patti at 476-2407.

Lost: Prescription sunglasses in gray case — call 476-2227

Lost Dog — Yellow Lab; 3-4 yrs. old; 80-100 lbs. Red collar and blue

& white flea collar. Named Harley. Call 476-2669

FOUND

Found — Silver ring with diamonds. Found in sand on south-east shore. Call Linda or Ron Witchie 476-9354 to describe it if it's yours.

Found — "Shock Doctor" mouth guard retainer, clear with black inserts. Pick it up any weekend at Brovold cottage, 62861 Lakeview Dr. (west side) or call 476-8862 or 684-5547.

SERVICES

Lawn care & More: Grass cutting, leaf raking, deck cleaning & odd jobs. Call Scott at 476-1001

MISC.

Stanley's gettin' desperate — Wanted: any female, preferably rich, young, beautiful and voluptuous, but at this point, even two-nosed, butt-ugly, jelly-roll fat, knock-kneed, pigeon-toed, toothless, bearded, bald, tattooed, multiply pierced, bunioned, calloused, knuckle-cracking, tobacco-spittin', Harley-ridin', nose-pickin', cigar smokin', pole-dancin', caldron-stirrin', broom-ridin' witches, wenches, bridge trolls, harpies, hags, strumpets and doxies are welcome to apply. Object: a deep, meaningful relationship (or a sleazy, meaningless one-night stand of sweaty hand holding and french kissing). Call Stanley at 476-2113.

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