Kids take to the water in BLYC's annual Regatta

Barker photos courtesy of Patty Russwurm and the PattiCam

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Dear Birch Lakers,

he time has come for my last letter to you as Commodore. It is hard to believe that my year is over. It seems just a few weeks ago that we were at last year's fall dinner, preparing to take the reins, and now here it is, time to pass them on. I must tell you all that Debbie and I have had a wonderful time this summer and it is all because of the people on this lake. We have gotten to meet so many of the residents and become so much closer to those we already knew that it made the less desirable parts of the job very few and easy.

The willingness of everyone to help with events has been phenomenal. I can't begin to name everyone that helped us this year but there are some that I must mention because they were right there to pitch in and make the year fun. No one could ask for a better Vice Commodore (actually more like a co-commodore) and Mrs. VC than Phil and Sandy Vitale. They were with us enthusiastically, every step of the way. And, of course there's Phil's work on the Barker,

which has been exemplary. Don and Lind Harman did a great job with the pancake breakfast, the kids regatta and fleet captain duties. John Gableman did fine work on the Corn and Sausage Roast and Jim and Sally Beck helped us turn the Yacht Club into an Island Paradise, while Barb Rondot cranked out the most delicious margaritas. For all the events, our faithful bartenders, Dean Davis, Patty Russwurm and Bob Hermes were there to hand out drinks and smiles. And I can't forget the four lovely ladies that put their hearts and souls into the Ladies Tea, Darlene Troyer, Maryann O'Neil, Helen Toth and Denny Weesner.

An enormous thanks to Paula Russell for making the most memorable kids events — the last one had 50 kids!!! It takes a very special person to give up their precious Saturdays to entertain a large group of children! These types of events make fine memories for kids that will help them look back fondly on their childhood summers at Birch Lake.

Thanks to everyone that helped on the boat parade, the golf outings and the road and Yacht Club clean-ups, plus all of the other jobs that needed doing. Also, my appreciation to all those that give their time

BLYC Calendar

Aug. 24Homeowners Assn. Annual meeting 10 am

Aug. 24Fall Dinner 5:30 pm, Camp Tannadoonah

to be on the Board of Directors, the Water Quality Committee and Home Owners Association. My last thank you goes to those dedicated Barker deliverers, through rain and sleet (?) and windy weather...

rain and sleet (?) and windy weather...

If I have missed anyone or any event, it was unintentional, and please know that I truly thank everyone that had anything to do with making this such a perfect summer.

The only event I have left to remind you of is tonight's Fall Dinner Hoedown. Hopefully you all got your reservations in for this, as it is going to be lots of fun. Be sure to wear your blue jeans and bandanas and meet us at the Tannadoonah dining hall at 5:30 pm.

See ya on the lake and at the dinner pardners!

-Commodore Jim



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 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.

Birch Lake Notes

Number 9 for Cal King This weekend Calvin King celebrates his ninth birthday (official anniversary of his birth is at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, August 27th) with three pals from South Bend Marshall School. Do honk your horn and wish him Happy Birthday as you toodle (cruise) by the King cottage!

Thanks from Grand Marshall

Just a note of thanks to all BLYC members. I was honored to be asked to be the Grand Marshall of the 2002 Boat Parade. I enjoyed the honor very much. Best wishes to all and may the tradition continue for many years to come.

-Earl Troeger

Thanks for the Ladies Tea

Helen, Maryann, Darlene and Denny, we though you had attained the ultimate in loveliness at last year's luncheon but you outdid yourselves on August 7! The party was elegant, beautiful and fun ... a touch of class.

Thank you from the ladies of Birch Lake.

-Loretta

Katie goes the distance

Kaitlin Kesmodel swam the distance of the lake during the last week of Camp

Tannadoonah! She also received the Order of the Birch for her attendance at camp for the last 8 years. Congratulations, Katie!

Birch Lake Sailing News

The publication of the major sailing rules this summer was a good thing. We all need to be reminded of them, and I would hope this would continue each year. Sailing is a great sport and the rules are very important. We are all on our honor to follow these rules and be good sports at all times.

-Earl Troeger

Thanks Scott!

Thank you Birch Lake Lawn Care & Scott Bouwkamp for donating your labor and needed hardware to repair the Birch Lake Yacht Club. A job well done.

The Company

Event though it is still summer and nobody is thinking of snow or the holidays, the holidays are just around the corner so the Comos, along with their musical production group "The Company" are getting ready for "Just Singin' and Dancin' into the Holidays."

"The Company" is Michiana's premier musical troop, having been rated #1 live Mitchell's celebrate 60 years

Mr. and Mrs. James Mitchell celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on August 22, 2002.

Betty J. Vullman and James W. Mitchell were married August 22, 1942 at ST. Paul's Methodist Church in elkhart, Indiana.

They are the parents of Nancy (Mike) Longo of Novi, MI and James W. II(Elaine) Mitchell of Sturgis, MI. They are the grandparents of three granddaughters, Kara, Michelle, Christen, and one grandson Erik.

Mrs. Mitchell is a homemaker and was a longtime community volunteer. Mr. Mitchell is a former owner of Sturgis Tool & Die, From which he retired in 1988. Prior to coming to Sturgis in 1973 he was a long time employee of Huckins Tool and Die in South Bend,



IN. dating back to WWII.

The Mitchells are formerly from South Bend., and Sturgis and have resided at Birch Lake, Vandalia, MI. since the early 1980's.

They will celebrate their anniversary with a family gathering this weekend.

theater production troop four years in a row. And the Comos, along with "The Company" have performed such classics as Chicago, Grease, Nunsense, Cabaret and Chorus Line, just to name a few.
"Just Singin' and Dancin'

into the Holidays" is a perfect way to start your holidays off right. So mark your calendar for Nov. 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23 at 8 at the Battell Center, 904 N. Main St., Mishawaka. For more info call 574-243-7704.

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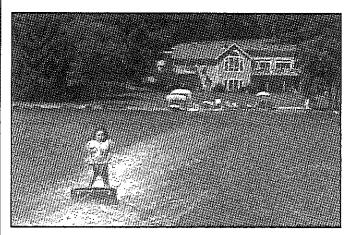
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Have A Safe and Fun Summer!

Birch Lake Notes

Barker Kids of the Week





Above: Bev and Herm Kruggel are proud of their two year old granddaughter, Ana Kruggel, on her first ski (flexa-board) ride around Birch Lake. Ana is the youngest daughter of Kurt and Kristy.

Left: Tyler Rondot, Don and Lind Harman's grandson, caught this 14" large mouth bass while trolling from a paddle boat in front of Zesingers. After the photo op the fish was returned to the lake ready to be caught again.

News from the Cove

By Sunny Waters who guides, informs and enlightens and is occasionally a bit nutsy, so deal with it.

Well friends, I'm facing some difficult times starting next week. I will be a new member of Pop Tarts Anonymous. I thought I could circumvent this misery by switching from strawberry to apple but B.S. gave it a no go and, get this, hung ten sleigh bells on the pantry door. I retaliated by pouring Mrs. Butterworth syrup on his sardines. So there, B.S.

As you may have surmised, NFTC doesn't have geographic limits. It also includes equal opportunity to be praised, chastised, etc. Recently I was thumbing through Birch Lake memorabilia and came upon a photograph of Phyllis Rasmussen taken by her father when she was a newborn. Please bear in mind that B.S. and I have outstandingly beautiful and intelligent grandchildren

(good genes, of course), but his portrait of Phyllis is exquisite beyond words and will always be a treasure.

Well, must run. This is coffee maker cleaning day and I smell a noxious mix of Starbucks and vinegar. Time for a rinse.

B.S., dear, sorry about the syrupy sardines but it could become a trend and just think of the royalties you could rake in!

A great big, huge thank you the Bergans and Blackwoods for a wonderful evening with equally wonderful people. It was a gala we'll not forget.

A Closing dash of memorabilia: 188 years ago
Washington D.C. was invaded by British forces who burned the Capitol, the president's house and many other public buildings.

NEVER AGAIN. God bless America and be good to one another.

-Sunny

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SOUTH ON CALVIN CENTER RD. OFF M-60 TO BROWNSVILLE RD. TURN EAST TO END OF ROAD 15674 BROWNSVILLE RD., VANDALIA Last Sunday was a very busy sailing day. The regular season races were held at 11:00 followed by the Kidz Regatta at 2:00. In the Sunfish "A" Fleet the 1st race was won by Jim Bolinger with Dave Olson coming on to win the second race. In the "B" Fleet Amy Troeger showed the way by winning both races. In the MC division we had the best turn out out to race. It was good to have Earl Troeger come out and rejoin the fleet, welcome back Earl. Rick Harman battled shifty winds and good competition to get a win in both races.

The Kidz Regatta was a big success in both the number of boats and the number of sailors. It was a pretty sight to see all those boats tied up in front of our house, 13 in all. Bob King's sleek looking Melges "E" Scow made a grand entrance. We had such a good turn out unfortu-

nately we ran out of tee shirts, we hope to have them ready by the weekend. A special thanks to Jim and Sally Beck, Bruce Wagner and all their helpers for spending most of last Sunday doing double duty on the com-

mittee boat. Thanks to all the kids and their parents for joining in and making the Kidz Regatta a great success. Also thanks to Amy Troeger for holding the pre race class on basic sailing.

-Don Harman, Fleet Captain

Kidz Regatta results

of the season as six boats came

Name	1st	2 nd
Bob King, Scott Troeger, Stewart Spratt, Tom Rogers Neil Troeger, Kyle Bernaciak, Calvin King Harold Cranmer, Ryan Rader, Jordan Rader Rick Harman, Conner Stigner Bruce Harlan, Kaitlin Kesmodel, Lauren Kesmodel Rachel Kelly, Matt Kelly, Joe S., Regina Lunkes Phil, Sandy Vitale, Patrick Russell, Connor Russell Dave Olson, Alex Wilson Jim Bolinger, Jared Rader Tess Kelly, Lisa Lunkes, Rachel Lunkes Joe Kelly, Jimmy Lunkes, Spencer Boukamp Amy Troeger, Amanda Lacy Tory Troeger, Kelsey Lamb	1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th 8th 10th 11th	2th 57th 5th 8th 9 NSth 10th 11th

Season standings					
Sailor	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Average	Place
MC's					
H. Cranmer	3	3		1527	1st
D. Harman	4	2		1511	3rd
R. Harman	1	1		1482	4th
S. Troeger	2	4		1526	2 nd
P. Vitale	6	5		1375	5 th
Earl Troeger	5	6		1266	6 th
Sunfish "A"					
J. Bolinger	1	3		1437	зrd
T. Howard	DNS	DNW		1590	1st
D. Olson	2	1		1437	3 _{LQ}
R. Russwurm	4	2		1365	6 th
D. Weaver	3	DNS		1391	4 th
Bob King	DNS	DNS		1455	2 nd
Doug Weaver	DNS	4		1379	5th
Sunfish "B"					
J. Meyer	DNS	DNS		1547	2 nd
S. Vitale	2	2		1532	3rd
C. Plaia	DNS	DNS		1584	1st
A. Troeger	1	1		1584	1st
"CATS"					

Accents & Images Interior Design Sheryl Papandria 63680 Birch Rd. Vandalia, MI 49095



No Cats participated in this week's racing.



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

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-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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The Best of Beck's Bistro

By Guest Chef Erica Vitale

Two of my favorite fall recipes which came from one of my sorority sisters.

Chicken Salad Casserole Serves 6, Prep Time 40

Ingredients:

4 cups of cooked (shredded) chicken can of Cream of Mushroom Soup can of mayonnaise Mushrooms and Celery to taste 8 oz. package of shredded cheese I cup of smashed potato chips

Directions:

Mix chicken, mushrooms, celery, soup and mayo. Pour into a 9 x13 baking dish. Cover with cheese and sprinkle on the chips. Cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Toffee

Preparation Time: <30 min. Freeze overnight. Great to give as a gift...fill a gift bag with the ingredients and use the recipe as a gift tag!

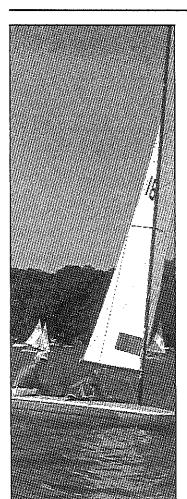
Ingredients:

2 sleeves of soda crackers 2 sticks of margarine (room temperature) I cup of sugar

I two ounce package of chocolate chips (room temp) Walnut chips

Directions:

Place one layer of soda crackers on a foil covered cookie sheet. Mix and boil the margarine and sugar. Stir constantly until frothy.
Pour the liquid over the crackers and immediately sprinkle on the chocolate chips. Allow them to melt a bit and use a spatula to spread the chocolate evenly across the crackers. Sprinkle on the walnut chips Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Freeze overnight. Break it apart and serve.



Bruce Harlan and Kaitlin and Lauren Kesmodel enjoyed the Kidz Regatta together aboard Harlan's MC sailboat. More than 25 kids sailed aboard 13 boats on Birch Lake Sunday.

Sweet Treats/Recipes from the 2002 Ladies Tea

Coconut Macaroons

1/3 c. flour 1/8 t. salt 2 1/2 c. shredded coconut 2/3 c. sweetened condensed

milk 1 t. vanilla extract

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease 2 cookies sheets. 2. Sift the flour and salt into a bowl. Stir in the coconut. 3. Pour in the sweetened condensed milk. Add the vanilla and stir from the center to make a very thick bat-

Chocolate Cherry Biscotti

(Makes about 40 biscotti) 3 c. flour ¼ t. salt 1 c. sugar 3 large eggs 2 T. oil 2 t. vanilla extract 1 1/2 t. almond extract

2/3 c. dried cherries

½ chocolate chips

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. 2. Combine flour and salt in a bowl.
- 3. Beat sugar and eggs at high speed till thick and pale. Add oil and

extracts. Add flour mixture beat-

ing at low speed just until blended. Stir in cherries and chocolate

4. Divide dough in half; turn out onto a baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Shape each portion into a 10 in. long rolls and flattened to 1 in thickness. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 minutes. Remove from baking sheet and cool for 15 minutes on a wire rack. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees.

5. Cut each roll diagonally into 1/2 inch slices. Place on baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes on one side, turn rolls and bake 10 more minutes. Remove from baking sheet, cool completely. Store in airtight container. 4. Drop heaped tablespoonfuls of batter 1 inch apart on pre-

pared sheets. Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Cool on rack.



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Birch Lake Kids Sure Know How to Party!

What a great turn out for the BLYC Fun Fair! About 50 Birch Lake Kids enjoyed carnival games, tie die, a moon walk, and pizza on Saturday, Aug 17th.

Neil Troeger said "it was the best party of my life ... I went home tired!" Thanks, Neil! That makes all the

effort well worth it.

Special thanks to Bill and Ann
Carpenter for the fantastic tie die. The
shirts were awesome! Hopefully, we
can keep up the tradition for the
"groovy" Birch Lake Kids.
Thanks also goes to:

■ Birch Lake Yacht Club- whose financial support helped make our events

possible.

- Mighty Mussel Hunters- whose mussel bounty really kicked in for the great "Last Bash of the Summer".
- All the great volunteers who helped make each event such a success, including Helen Toth, Elizabeth Parkinson, Mike Russell, Terry Carroll, Ann Kesmodel, Ann and Bill Carpenter, all our teen helpers, etc., etc., etc.
 If I didn't mention you in print, I am still thankful in heart!

Have a great fall. See you in

Summer 2003!

-Paula Russell

Thanks Paula, Don, et al!

The Birch Lake kids want to express many thanks to Paula Toth Russell, Fleet Cap'n Don Harman, the Yacht Club officers and board for

sponsoring / supporting kids events this summer. Birch Lake Yacht Club seemingly lost a generation of kids, but this current group, the next wave, are founding deep friendships for the future.

Thanks to all!



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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 email 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.	······································



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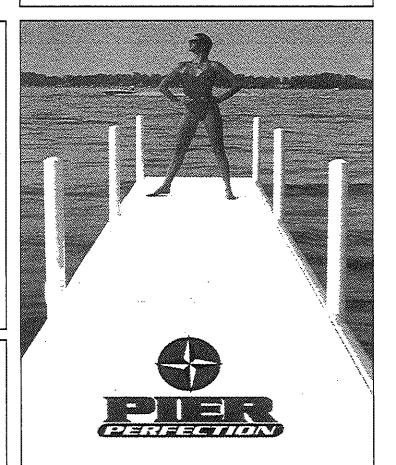
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BIRCH LAKE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM - BLYC Water Quality Committee

Dan Reynolds, Chairman

Rick Russwurm, Bob\Temple, Gertie Temple, Terry Dugan

August 2002 Report #10

expressions - from a different view

-by g.temple

There is a magic to my name that glistens with delight,

a ripple, a splash, a stir, silence, sometimes a doubt

A change of hue with every scene, there is no season best of all

Reflections from upon the land greet Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall.

The oak, the dogwood, the sassafras turn amber, soarlet, gold. The air turns cold. Like the leaves, you're

gone. Snowflakes touch me softly - disappear Collect upon the branches of the trees remaining here

I miss you too, but it's nice to know, you'll be back again next year.

The happy folk who share in daily vigil on my

Who see the winter sun set the sky afire Who see the winter moon so slowly rise amid the silent stars

Who see a deer in the snow. NO.there are seven more The magic of this Fairyland, you now believe is true

For now you know that Santa even loves my beautiful blue.

I've been asleep, so very, very quiet, nurtured under ice and snow by my healthy spring-fed diet. From cold hibernation, I wake to the warmth of the sun and the winds from the south, amid the excitement of spring.

She watches me, she sees me as my waves

begin to grow She hears the splashing sound as I gulp more ice and snow

She marvels at this wondrous sight, she wonders who else sees The chase, the trap, the winter flight, devoured by such magic might.

The fragile wild flower of spring, a bud, leaf, a bird to sing.

Frogs, toads, turtles, boys. Girls, giggles, baby toys. Trees and sunsets, morning skies, fluffy clouds, and butterflies. Good friends. Family ties.

I love it when you're in your boat, I know your every wish. I listen when you speak to me, I know you

love to fish.

May I keep you ever throwing, your line across my blue

May you catch your daily limit, Happy 86th, Birthday to you.

Into the west where the sun will set, illuminate the sky, he sails into the purple hue, again I hear him sigh. The peace, the sun, sky, fun. He turns a homeward sail. I pray. Thank you for this sailor, his family, friends, and neighbors too, who share my richness not in gold, but in my beautiful blue.

You hear me splash, you're on my shore, run-ning to the pier. A rainbow. It touches me. 'Beautiful, beautiful, Birch Lake, Beautiful, beautiful, Birch LAKE, Beautiful, beautiful BIRCH Lake" you sing the song all day long.

Sometimes when I am pensive, reminiscing f the past, of when you were that child. My, you grew up fast. I remember when I was introduced to your little nose. I felt your hands caressing me. I touched your little toes.

The magical moment of their return to my ore away from the real world they say, with their "kids" and their dogs to Gram and Gramps for a stay,

"Oh what a beautiful morning, oh what a beautiful day"

-Forever yours, Birch Lake

Know your enemy: Purple Loosestrife

Purple Loosestrife at Birch Lake, it is important that we know what we are looking for.

Flower: Individual flowers have five or six



pink-purple petals surrounding small, yellow centers. Each flower spike is made up of many individual flow-

Seed Capsule: As flowers begin to drop off, capsules

containing many tiny seeds appear in their place. Depending on where you live, plants may go to seed as early as late July.



Seed: Each mature plant can produce up to 2.7 million seeds annually. As tiny as grains of sand, seeds are easily spread by water, wind, wildlife and humans. Germination can occur the following season, but seeds may lay dormant for several years before sprout-

Leaves: Leaves are downy, with smooth edges. They are usually arranged opposite each other in pairs which alternate down the stalk at 90 degree angles, however, they may appear in groups of three.

Stalks: Stalks are square, five or six-sided, woody, as tall as 2m (6+ ft.) with several stalks on mature plants.

Perennial Rootstock: On mature plants, rootstocks are extensive and can send out up to 30 to 50 shoots, creating a dense web which chokes out other plant life.

What to do if you see it: Recently some vigilant residents identified a small patch of Purple Loosestrife in the growth near the water's edge at Camp Tannadoonah. Water Quality Committee member Rick Russwurm and volunteer Bruce Wagner waded into the area and removed the Purple Loosestrife,

hopefully before it could get a foothold. Russwurm said that depending on the cycle the plant is in, proper removal is essential. He pointed out that if the plant is removed before it has gone to seed, it can be dug up (all roots must be removed), but if the plant has seeded, it must be bagged (to ensure the seeds don't spread) before being dug up.

Because of the potential for inadvertently spreading the seeds and perpetuating the plant's life at Birch Lake, The Water Quality Committee recommends that anyone who spots the potential threat contact the committee immediately.

Committee Update

Dugan joins the Committee

Terry Dugan, a long-time resident of the South Shore, has volunteered and was appointed by the BLYC Commodore at last Saturday's board meeting. Dugan, who has a PhD in Biology, and works at a cancer research institute in New Jersey, said he hopes to live year-round at Birch Lake within the next five years. Welcome Terry!

E-Coli testing scheduled

The Water Quality Committee has announced that tests for E-coli will be taken this month (and results published in the Barker if possible), and that the bacteria levels will be checked annually in the future.

Is This A Great Country Or What?

We made it to the Chicago wedding and reception last weekend, a four o'clock affair that lasted well into the evening. As I mentioned in this column last week, the groom was a fortyish bachelor who had shown extreme signs of nervousness and doubt as his wedding day grew near. He and his fiancée had been crab walking toward the altar for almost three years, and many of their friends doubted they would ever get there. Shirley Anne and I weren't certain what we should wish for.

Nevertheless when Saturday came,

Nevertheless when Saturday came, everything went so beautifully and so smoothly that it was hard to imagine why any of us had ever had doubts. The groom had told me more than once that if he "made it that far," he would be at peace with getting married, a portrait of calm and serenity on the big day. He did not lie.

I came home with a smile on my face and with very good feelings about the new marriage, because it was such an "only in America" wedding. This was the union of a deeply religious young woman, whose roots go back for generations in the family centered Black Baptist Church, and a thoroughly secular successful Black business man who grew up as one of three children raised by a divorced mother on the South Side of Chicago. Most of the friends she's had all her life attended the wedding. Most of the

prison or deep into the life of the streets.

Her friends and family and neighbors are all African American. His family is black as well, but his friends and neighbors and business associates are black, white, Hispanic, and Asian. I counted ten Black/White, Asian/Black, Hispanic/Gringo couples on his side of the room. There were

boys he grew up with are now dead or in

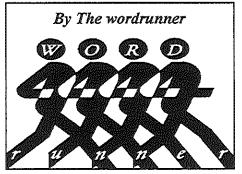
none on her side, but those who were "there for the bride," showed a keen interest in the Goulash the groom had assembled. Everyone enjoyed everyone else, and I have never heard more laughter and celebration than that mixed group generated.

He is truly the most color-blind person I've ever known. In the wedding party, she had five lovely, quiet, young women who had always been a part of her life. He had three black men, two of whom he'd known since high school, and two white men, one ten years older than he is, and the other ten years younger. They were all friends of each other who had been brought together by the groom's eclectic taste in companions.

The ceremony was typical of the compromises that will be required by this union. It was a religious ceremony, conducted by the pastor of the bride's church, with religious music provided by a relative of the bride, but it took place in a banquet facility parlor in the room next door to the dining hall set aside for the reception. Everything was beautiful, a symphony in red and white, and the groom, who sometimes performs with his own band as a professional singer, sang the songs that brought the wedding party and the bride down the aisle. His voice is magnificent – he can melt your heart.

We sat up front at the groom's mother's table. She was a New Orleans girl who came north at twenty-two with a husband and two children. A couple of years later, she had another baby and shortly after that, her husband left and she had to decide what to do. I would probably have run home to Louisiana where I had an extended family and many friends. She got a job as a cleaning woman and set about the task of raising her kids.

She is a tall, stately, lovely woman who



doesn't look much older than her youngest child, and she supports herself today much as she did when she first found herself alone in a city of millions with little education and training. She has not an ounce of self-pity or bitterness in her make-up. She works hard, she makes her own way, and she need turn to no one for anything. Naturally, her son adores her.

I once asked him how he had avoided falling into the gang life when he was young. "My mother would have killed me," he said. When I told her that story Saturday evening, she smiled and said, "He's right." She left the party earlier than many others, because she had to go to work on Sunday morning.

Life ain't always fair, and it has certainly not been fair to many of the people we met at the wedding. Yet, the expression we heard most often from the bride's friends and family was, "The Lord has really blessed me," and the attitude of most of those on the groom's side of room seemed to be, "We've all been working hard, so let's have a party." Great bunch of people. Wonderful stories. Only in America. Is this a great country or what?



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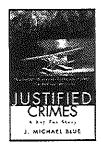
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All royalties on books ordered from Jim will be donated to The Birch Lake Yacht Club



Stu's Star Stuff

The planet Venus continues to shine brightly in

the west-southwest as darkness falls. It's easy to spot as it is the brightest object in the sky, not counting the moon.

Venus is a planet completely covered in bright white featureless clouds. The only interest Venus holds for amateur astronomers with telescopes is its changing shape and size. Fortunately Venus accomplishes both dramatically. Because its orbit is inside the Earth's, we see Venus pass through all phases from crescent to full. Furthermore, since it comes close to us, the planet's apparent size varies significantly. In half an orbit, a telescope observer can watch Venus change from a small round disk, almost dot, to a thin

crescent 6 times larger in diameter. Venus currently appears half full in a telescope. By early October the crescent will be large enough to glimpse in binoculars.

Because of its orbit, Venus moves quickly across the backdrop of stars in our sky. Right now it's closing in on Spica, the brightest star in Virgo. To find Spica, first look for the Big Dipper in the northern sky. Follow the arc of the handle away from the bowl to "Arc to Arcturus, then speed on to Spica." By Tuesday the two should be about 3 1/2 degrees apart, about the width of 2 fingers.

Look in the west-southwest 40 minutes after sunset. The time is important. Venus should be easy to pick out if you don't have

obstructions in the critical direction. Spica will be a bit more difficult since it is more than 100 times fainter. Once you find Venus look to the upper left for the star. You may recall that just last week 10 degrees separated the two objects. Set up an observing schedule to watch every clear night 40 minutes after sunset, until the end of this month. You'll be impressed by how quickly the scene changes from night to night. By Thursday, less than

The show is held over every night, but there are always some changes; some subtle, some quite dramatic, so enjoy. And don't forget, it's free!

2 degrees separate the pair.

-Stewart Spratt



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Homeowners' Association News

The Constantine Public Schools decided recently to seek a property tax increase of 7 mills payable for the next 27 years to finance school construction projects. This possible tax increase would affect tax-payers on most of Birch Lake except for those on the west side who are in the Cassopolis School district. Constantine School's proposal this time is for two construction projects totaling \$28,310,00. The first is for \$24,850,000 for building a new high school, converting the existing high school to a middle

school, and for improvements to the two elementary schools. The second is for \$3,460,000 for a new auditorium for the high school.

Both proposals will be submitted to the voters on Monday, September 23, 2002. The place for voters from Birch Lake to cast their ballots will be the Mason Township Hall, at the corner of Kessington Road and US-12. This is a change from the usual voting place, which was outside the Constantine School district boundaries.

If approved by the voters,

the proposals will result in a property tax increase estimated to be 7.00 mills (\$7.00 for each \$1,000 of taxable valuation). Taxable value is theoretically ½ of market value. As an example of the impact of a 7 mill tax increase, a property with a mar-ket value of \$300,000 and taxable value of \$150,000 would pay an additional \$1,050 per year in property taxes, or \$28,350 over the 27 years of the millage increase (without factoring in the effect of increases in taxable valuation permitted under the law). Constantine

Schools has previously sought tax increases for similar school construction projects on four occasions, but the voters rejected each of them.

This Monday, August 26, 2002 is the deadline to register for this election. If you have not voted recently you should check your registration, because we understand there have been some difficulties with the voter registration records following the switch to computerized records. The registration form

Continued on next page

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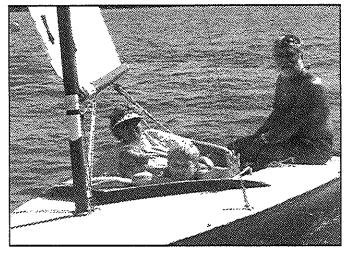
Homeowners

Continued from previous page

can be obtained from the internet at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/voterreg-app_16084_7.pdf or at the township clerk's office (Porter Township Hall, Administrative Building, 69373 Baldwin Prairie Road), or at any of the Constantine schools or the school administrative office. A limited number of copies of the voter registration form will also be available at the Homeowners' Association annual meeting Saturday, August 24 beginning at 10 a.m. (Indiana time) at the BLYC clubhouse, or may be obtained while they last either from Scott Troeger (Cottage 101, second to the East of the Landing) or Rick Russwurm (Northside, 14743 Kiloqua Woods Lane) during the weekend.

Important dates:

Monday, August 26, 2002: deadline to register to vote. Monday, September 23, 2002: vote regarding \$28,310,000 Constantine School construction projects and 7 mill, 27 year property tax increase.



Patrick and Connor Russell joined Phil and Sandy Vitale aboard the Pickle-d Sunday for the annual Kidz Regatta.

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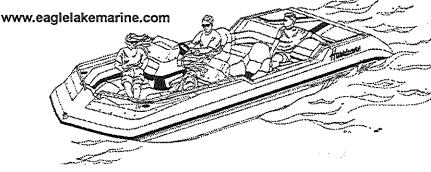
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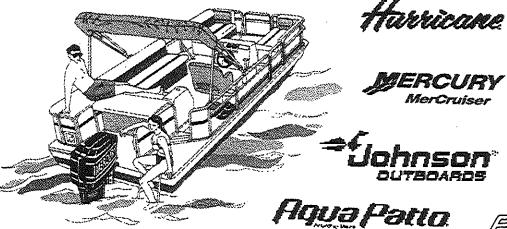


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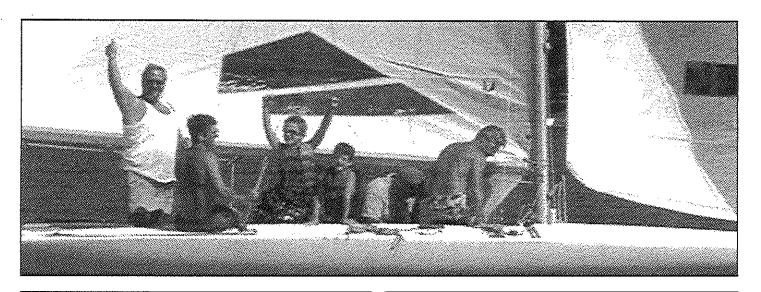
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Boat Lift: Shore Master aluminum boat lift. Maximum boat beam is 96 inches. Holds 3600 pounds. Does not have canopy. Has cradle brackets and boat guides. This lift is in very good condition — winch, wheel, cable, boat guides and pulleys all new in 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

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--- also ---24' Riviera Cruiser Pontoon; seat covers, radio, canopy, ice chest, 40 hp motor \$5,900. Call Nagys at 269-476-2612 or 574-522-0995.

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.

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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: jetbooks@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. 269-471-7647 or 269-921-0710

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 southeast 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.

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The response from the 2002 classified ads has been so successful that Stan is regrettably unable to schedule individual evening appointments with the respondents. Eligible ladies are therefore encouraged to attend the Fall Dinner and sign up on Stan's dance card to dosey-do ...

Happy 32nd Anniversary wishes are extended from the many laker friends to the Vitales next Tuesday the 27th of August!

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