



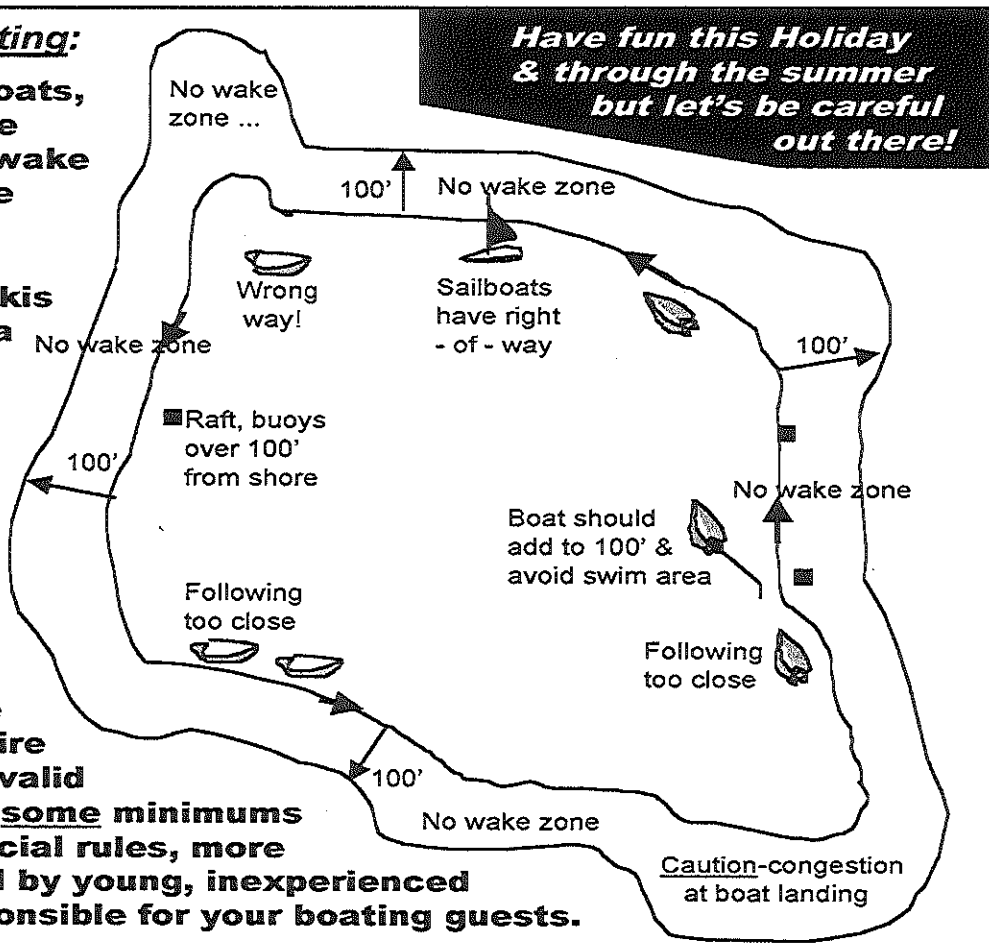
Weekend of May 24, 2003

Hey, the Barker's here ... it must be summer!

# Let's Make Safety a Priority!

## Common-Sense Boating:

- \* **Go slow near other boats, rafts & shore. You are responsible for your wake**
- \* **Take your time & give room - stay 100' from boats, rafts & shore**
- \* **Pulling someone on skis or tube requires extra caution, an observer & add the length of your tow line to the 100' rule**
- \* **Drive only in the counter-clock-wise direction (flow)**
- \* **One wearable USCG life jacket must be available for each person on board! One throwable device, a fire extinguisher, horn & valid boat registration are some minimums**
- \* **PWCs have many special rules, more caution must be used by young, inexperienced drivers. You are responsible for your boating guests.**



## COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

**H**ey there, hi there, ho there...  
 If you've just returned from a month or so of snow-birding in warmer climates, (or otherwise didn't get a chance to experience the ice fishing and snow shoveling), the winter was long and cold at Birch Lake, and we're all glad it's over!  
 Judging from the number of piers and boats that have been springing up around the lake, a lot of our neighbors are as anxious as we are for good weather.  
 While the Memorial Day weekend is the official start of a season of carefree fun for many of us, we should take a little time to reflect on the meaning of the day and honor the memory of those who died defending our country and our freedoms.  
 And while we're reflecting ... let's all take a bit of time to reflect on the issues of safety that we need to live with for the summer — please see the illustration

above and learn (and abide by) the "rules of the road" for our lake.  
 Big thanks to our neighbors (and visitors) who helped us clean up the club and the roads for spring, and who helped us set up for (and clean up after) the Chili Cookoff and the Spring Dinner.  
 Special thanks to the Birch Lake Thespian troupe for their gallant attempt at entertaining us with an inspired mystery dinner — unfortunately a big crowd and an inadequate sound system left the performance a mystery to most of us.  
**Upcoming Events**  
 We will have our first BLYC board meeting of the year today (Saturday) at 9 am, and a practice/tune-up sailboat race Sunday at 11 am.  
 The social season will continue in fine fettle on June 7 with a Monte Carlo Night Commodore's Party at the Yacht Club (7 pm, Indiana time).  
 We need a lot of help with this one, folks. We are trying to solicit donations

of merchandise for the winners to spend their bucks on ... and we are looking for help with the games, so if you'd like to deal blackjack or spin the roulette wheel (we also need people to serve refreshments, and work on the cleanup committee), contact me as soon as possible.  
**A note on contributions**  
 We have decided that this year we won't publish the list of names of the people who have (or haven't) paid their membership dues. We all appreciate and share the benefits from your continued financial support of the Birch Lake Yacht Club. Your donations pay for social events and Fourth of July fireworks, as well as ensuring the continued diligence of the Water Quality Committee and the Homeowners' Association — and your support is even more valuable because it is freely given for the mutual benefit of a community united by a common love for a great lake.  
 Have a fun and safe summer.  
 -Commodore Phil



This is the first Barker of the year and we are eagerly soliciting and accepting materials for future publication. Just put the materials in the red Barker box at 63174 Birch Rd. (East Shore) or e-mail the info to me at sailorphil@philvitale.com. If you must, mail 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

## News From Camp

Welcome back residents of Birch Lake! The long winter is finally over and Camp Tannadoonah is getting back into the swing of things. With all the early snow and late leaf dropping we have had to scurry to get the grounds ready for the summer.

On Sunday May 25th we are having a camp open house from 1-4 Indiana Time. Included in the open house festivities is an official ground breaking ceremony of the new Tennis Courts. Also we are selling Port-A-Pit Chicken; at \$4.50 for a half chicken, \$6 for a chicken dinner. So come on up and enjoy. Tours will be given by past and current camp staff.

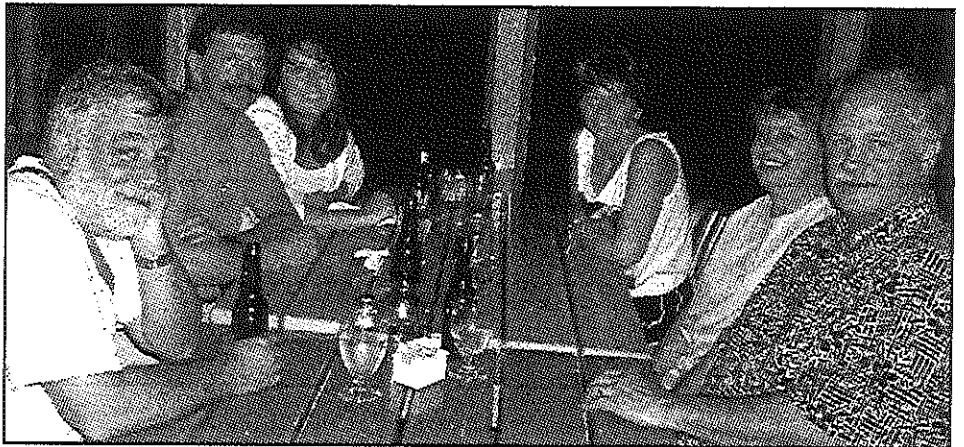
We are really looking forward to a wonderful summer of fun at Birch Lake. We have already had two work days, and four groups of kids up at camp. Our staff training begins on June 8th and we are still looking for one or two people to fill out the remainder of the staff. The week of June 15th the People of Praise church group will be at camp, followed directly by our first week of camp beginning June 22. If you have anyone interested in camp this summer please contact the Camp Fire USA office at (574)234-4145 or by e-mail [cfbg@netnitco.net](mailto:cfbg@netnitco.net). Also visit our website [www.tannadoonah.org](http://www.tannadoonah.org).

Thanks to Bruce Harlan for helping get our commercial into the rotation on Channel 16.

## BLYC Calendar

<b>Saturday</b>	Board Meeting 9 am	<b>July 6</b>	Pancake Breakfast
<b>Sunday</b>	Sailing Tune-up/Practice with shotgun start at 11 am	<b>July 19</b>	Bad Patty Punch Party and Marc's Fancy Pants Dance
<b>June 7</b>	Commodore's Party: Monte Carlo Night at BLYC	<b>July 25</b>	Men's Golf Outing
<b>June 21</b>	Board Meeting 9 am	<b>July 26</b>	Board Meeting 9 am
<b>June 28</b>	Vice Commodore's Party "A Paris Evening"	<b>July 26</b>	Garage Sale
<b>July 4</b>	Fireworks	<b>July 30</b>	Women's Tea (tentative)
<b>July 5</b>	Firework Cleanup	<b>Aug. 8</b>	Women's Golf (tentative)
<b>July 5</b>	Boat Parade 2 p.m.	<b>Aug. 9</b>	Corn and Sausage Roast
		<b>Aug. 16</b>	Board Meeting 9 am
		<b>Aug. 23</b>	Fall Dinner

Times on Parties: All parties at the yacht club will begin at 7 pm Indiana time unless otherwise noted.



The Russwurms, Rogers and Vitales spent part of their winter with a sailing trip to the Caribbean around the island of Saint Martin.

-Mr. Dug



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*Have A Safe and Fun Summer!*

# Birch Lake Notes



Birch Lake was well represented this winter in Florida, these neighbors gathered for the annual get-together before their spring migration began. According to one of the vacationers, despite the decidedly un-Birch like weather, the group managed to enjoy themselves anyway.

Thanks to Herm Kruggel for the great photo.



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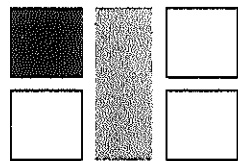
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We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable  
summer at Birch Lake!

*-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak*

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# Birch Lake Notes

## News of Pedro

Pedro Kinner, right, is riding a bicycle from Lake Tahoe to Birch Lake. He was scheduled to leave April 24th and expected to arrive here around May 20th.

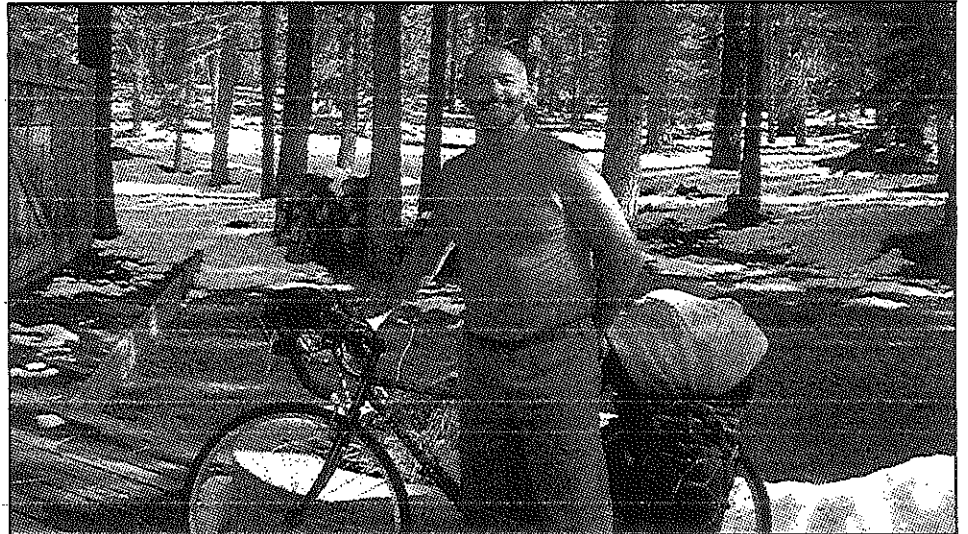
We haven't heard whether he has arrived here yet, but we got the following updates:

April 30: Thanks for the pic in the Barker I'm a lot skinnier already and its only been 500 miles.

May 3: The trip is a trip. I've been on the road 7 days now for 500 miles. I'm in Cedar city Utah, about to climb to 10,500 feet tomorrow. Had to spend the day in my tent all day yesterday — It hailed 5 times, about dime size and wind like crazy all day. Thank God for my new LL Bean tent. Anyhow, every day in Nevada there were about 4 to 5 passes and now there should be only one huge one each day. Next major stop Pleasant View, CO, where the Wolf family moved and built a house of straw bales over the winter.

## New directories are here

The new 2003 Birch Lake Yacht Club Directories are done — many were passed out at the spring dinner. One directory is available to all BLYC members (who have paid their dues) free of charge (you'll need to sign for your free copy; additional copies available for \$3 each). I'll bring directories to all BLYC functions, or you can call me at 1680 to



**Bicycling Pedro at Lake Tahoe before his cross-country trip to Birch Lake**

arrange to pick one up.

## Skier-Down Warning Flag

The Birch Lake Yacht Club, in conjunction with Nick Freihofer and Junior Achievement, is selling bright-yellow flags that ski spotters can wave to warn other boats that there is a skier down in the vicinity. The flags are just \$5 each; proceeds will benefit the Yacht Club.

## Seen Ben's Barn?

The east side of Birch Lake has a new look. Ben Wozniak has recently had a Barn moved to his property across the

road from his home. The barn, which was built in the late 1800s, formerly sat on property in Buckley, MI, near Traverse City. Ben had it moved here and reassembled by a group of Amish carpenters. He plans to paint and restore the barn over the summer.

## Help Wanted!

We still need help with most events! If you are able and willing to volunteer for any of the summer events (see the schedule on Page 2), please call me at 1680, or contact any officer or board member as soon as possible.

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# BLYC Sailing News

Weather permitting, we will begin our 2003 sailing season with a Warm-up/Practice round for all sailors on Sunday, May 25, beginning at 11 am. The marks will be set on the course, and the Becks will serve as starters for a "shotgun" start (with all boats starting at the same time).

We encourage everyone to come out and join the fun! The regular racing season will begin soon (watch the Barker for complete details).

-Harold Cranmer  
2003 Fleet Captain

This Week:  
**Memorial Day  
Tune-Up**  
Sunday, May 25 11 am  
Starter Boat, Marks,  
Shotgun Start!



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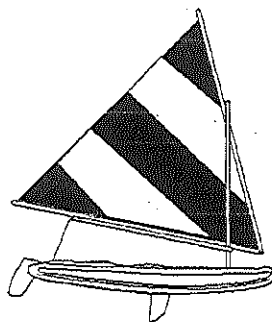
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## HELP WANTED!

The sailors of Birch Lake need your help. Every Sunday (when the weather cooperates) we try to race sailboats on Birch Lake. In order to do so, we have to have people who will help with the "starting" boat to begin and finish the races. We have many of the



weeks covered already (thanks to the Becks), but we would love to have other boats to fill in when they aren't available — and people to help them are always appreciated. If you are available to help on the Beck boat, or if you can stand in for us once in a while, we'd love to hear from you. All supplies and equipment (except the

boat) will be furnished; we'll even provide training if you don't know how the whole thing works ...

To volunteer, contact Harold Cranmer at 2170; or Phil Vitale at 1680.

### Safe Boating

The Marine Division of the Cass County Sheriff's Department will have a boat check later this month (watch the Barker for date and time).

Safe Boating Classes have been scheduled from 8 am to 2

pm on 6/14 at the Donnell Lake Conservation Club (M60 & Storey Rd); and on 6/28 at the Cass County Conservation Club (US 12 & Birch Rd.). Call the Cass Sheriff's Department Marine Division at 445-8644 (ext. 5) to register

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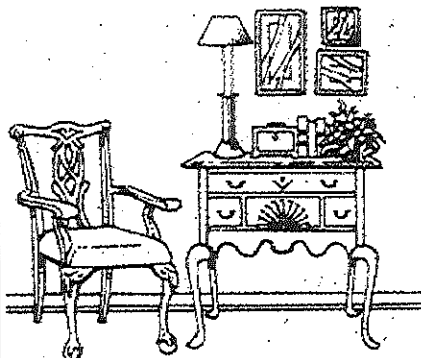
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## Water Quality Committee Report

The Birch Lake Water Quality Committee has received the annual summary report for 2002 from the Michigan Lakes & Streams Association, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and Michigan State University. The results are as follows:

**Secchi Disk Transparency**  
Secchi disk depth is a measure of clarity. Water clarity often indicates a lake's overall water quality. Weekly measurements are made from mid-May through mid-

September.

Birch Lake maximum transparency: 31.0 feet; mean transparency: 20.5 feet. This ranks in upper-middle area of the "oligotrophic" range, indicating Birch is among the clearest lakes in the state.

**Chlorophyll a (ug/l)**

The amount of algae in a lake can be estimated by measuring chlorophyll a concentration in the water. As an algal productivity indicator chlorophyll a is often used to determine the trophic state of a lake.

Birch Lake chlorophyll readings by the month are:

May=2; June=less-than-1; July=2; Aug=2; Sept=1.

These readings also place Birch Lake in the "oligotrophic" category.

**Phosphorus (ug/l)**

Algae needs phosphorus to grow and reproduce. It is the key nutrient affecting the amount of algae and weed growth for Birch lake. The total amount of phosphorus in the water is typically used to predict the level of productivity in the lake.

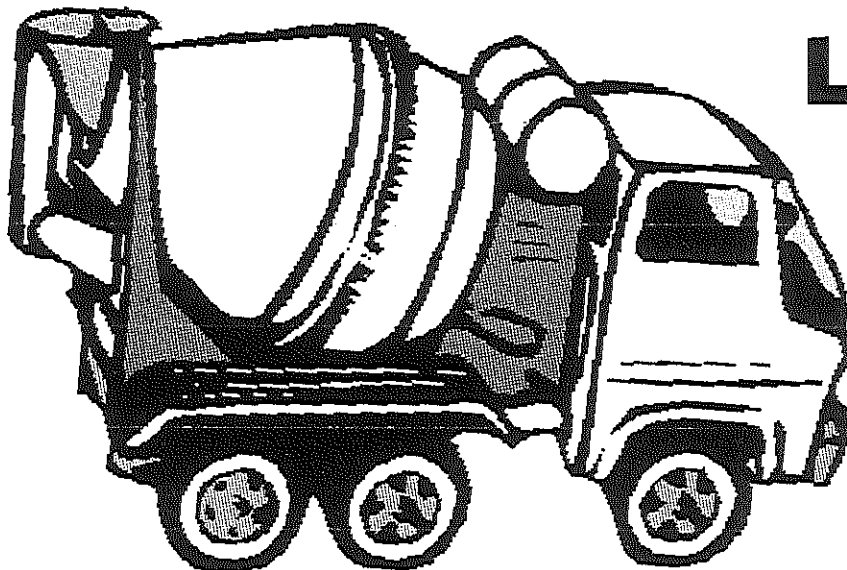
Birch Lake Spring Overtum = 10; Birch Lake

Later Summer = 3T (less than the limit of quantification).

These readings also place Birch Lake in the "oligotrophic" category.

**Rapid Algal Assay (pilot program)**

The results from the 2001 CLMP Rapid Algal Assay pilot program have been reported out by the project consultant. Birch Lake is *not* very productive, which is consistent with other water quality data reported for 2002, and is consistent with the excellent condition of the lake.



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# Stu's Star Stuff



Welcome back my friends to the show that never ends. Did you get to see the Lunar Eclipse last week? It was cloudy where I was, so I didn't get to see it. I heard it was stunning. So what's up there now?

The Big Dipper is currently near its maximum height, toward the end of evening twilight. The popular figure is so high up, nearly overhead for us lake observers, that casual skywatchers may miss it. In addition, because the sky seems to have so many more stars here than in town, I find it challenging sometimes to pick out the brighter, more familiar constellations that are easy to spot at home.

Remember that the Pointer Stars, the

two at the end of the bowl, can be used to find the North Star, the end of the handle on the Little Dipper. Similarly, the Big Dipper's handle stars will trace an "arc to Arcturus," the bright star two-thirds of the way up in the southeast, and "speed on to Spica," located slightly more than a third up in the south. Spica is fainter than Arcturus, but still 1st magnitude, thus easy to spot.

For you early risers, over the next several mornings, persistent observers can follow the dance of Venus and Mercury in the east-northeastern sky. Venus is very low, and Mercury's current appearance is tricky. Nevertheless, the event may be worth your effort. As the week progresses, look about 40 minutes before sunrise

to watch as the crescent moon slides through the area, too, adding to the scene. Binoculars will be necessary for 1st-magnitude Mercury.

Lastly, although it represents the combined light of millions of stars, the Milky Way is so faint that almost any artificial light source blocks the view. The Milky Way is better seen at the lake than in town. And if we all make an effort to control light pollution we will all better enjoy the show.

And as you all know, it's free.

Next week: "Does anybody really know what time it is?"

-Stewart Spratt

## Things every dog owner should know

By Fido's Friend

The Cass County Animal Shelter has published a brochure with the rules and regulations for pet owners.

Included are the following:

■ Your dog must be kept on your property. If it is off your property, it must be held in proper leash. If your dog is tethered by a chain or rope, it

is unlawful to tether a dog unless the tether is at least three times the length of the dog (from the tip of its nose to the base of its tail). The tether must be attached to a harness or nonchoke collar designed for tethering.

■ If your dog is outside for an extended period of time, state law requires the dog have a roofed, enclosed structure of appropriate size.

■ No dog shall bark in a man-

ner that rises to the level of a public nuisance.

■ You must report finding a stray dog to Animal Control within 48 hours of finding it.

■ If your dog bites a person or another animal, the bit must be reported to animal control. Your dog will need to be quarantined for a 10-day period.

■ Penalties for violations of the county Dog Ordinance are punishable by a fine of \$500 and/or 90 days in jail.



For further information contact Cass County Animal Control at 445-3701.

  
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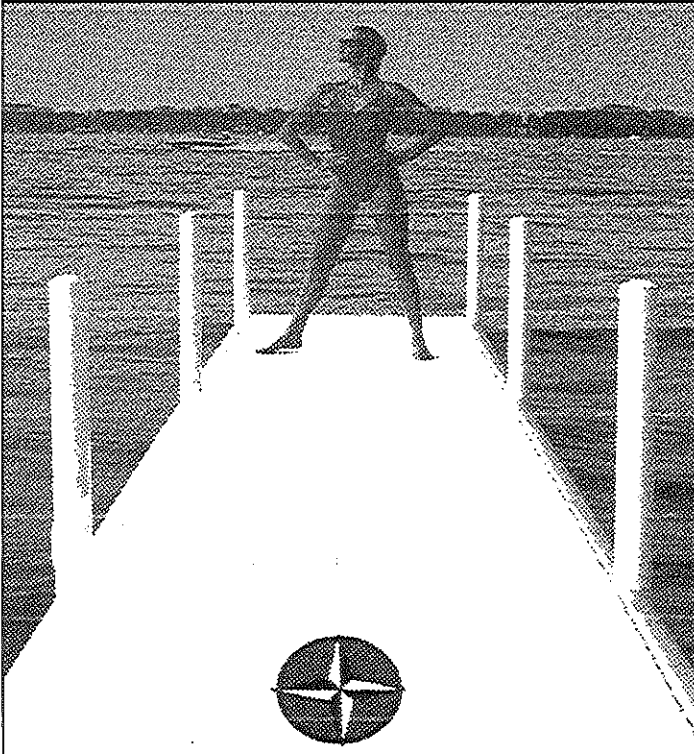
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**Memorial Day/Decoration Day**

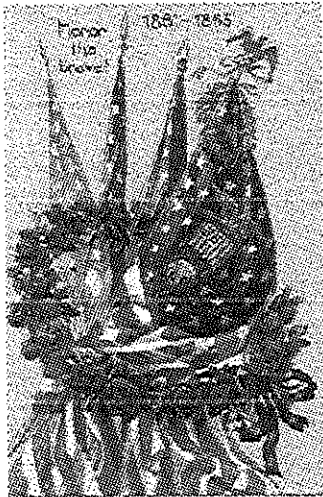
There are many stories of the beginning of Memorial Day, with over two dozen cities and towns laying claim to being its birthplace.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in General Order No. 11, and was first observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers

were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the

last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act, P.L. 90 - 363, in 1971 to ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays).

During the first celebration of Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried in the cemetery.



**Memorial Day**

Memorial Day and Labor Day are bookend holidays, marking the beginning and end of the summer holidays in the United States. Over time the original purpose may become diluted, diminished. In fact, even the name & date have been changed! We the people are often divided when the US Armed Forces go to war. What follows are notes from various sources lest we forget that Memorial Day is a time to remember those who fell in service to our country ... that Freedom isn't free.  
~ Chrys A. Lis

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# Opening Up

For many years the spring recipe for getting our Birch Lake home ready for the summer included one part labor and one part celebration. It called for cleaning and repairing that worked our muscles, stretched our schedules, and frustrated us with unpleasant surprises like a mower that refused to start or a mouse nest that hadn't been there when we closed up in the fall.

However, this time of preparation was always leavened by the certainty that we were beginning a new summer season, getting into a time marked by relaxation, family togetherness, and beautiful, sensual and serene days and nights. The best time of the year was upon us.

All of that is still true, but now that we in the Blue household are into our 30th summer at Birch, the "opening up" ritual has come to mean a good deal more than just work and anticipation. (Shirley Anne will mark her 57th Birch season this year, but our time as a family began much later.) Inevitably each spring-clean up now brings on heavy doses of nostalgia and a great deal of reflection.

As many of you know, we closed the season last year with a celebration of our 40th wedding anniversary. A month later Shirley Anne went into Methodist Hospital in Indianapolis for surgery that put her on the sidelines until we left for Florida in February.

Shortly after we returned I began treatment for an outbreak of skin cancer on my face, multiple lesions that would have been

tough to respond to surgically, and the treatment turned out to be at least as tough for me to wade through as the disease had been.

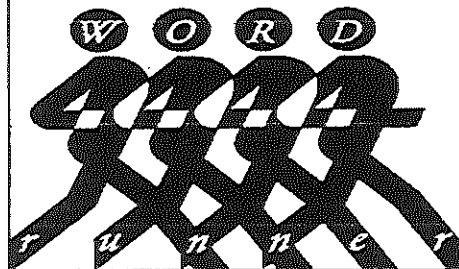
So, this year's season opening is particularly riveting around our house. We have come to recognize in a very visceral way that marking the seasons with clean up rituals is also marking the passage of time and measuring the progress of our lives. We're not preparing "to meet our maker" in the near term, but if we look at our lives as a trip over a mountain, we are clearly moved past the summit.

We've been blessed with health and vigorous constitutions so we've never "felt" the passage of time. Shirley Anne looks young and acts young and since she is the mirror that I encounter every day, I often fail to notice that I am getting older. She has never had to "take care" of me as she did over the past month and a half, and so for the first time, she has seen me falter.

Someone once said that there is nothing like the prospect of being hung to focus a man's mind. I suppose that this is so, but the realization that one is always in danger of losing the people and things he or she values most and that each of us is always running out of time to do the things we cherish is pretty mind focusing as well.

As we've begun our "opening up" this year I've been particularly mindful of the great gift of life on this lake. Our three decades as a Birch Lake family have been a gift, a joy, and a privilege. We should

By The wordrunner



grab onto and experience every minute of the time we have left instead of throwing the days over our shoulders and moving on as though tomorrow is always more important than today and as if there are sure to be an endless number of tomorrow's.

That doesn't mean that all of us will always choose to remain here. Jane and Ernie Nagy, both of whom loved this place, came to realize that their Birch Lake days were behind them, and my own sainted mother-in-law Millie Wentworth/Gollatz eventually sold her beloved "Add-A-Bit" in the cove. There are times and seasons for all things.

But this year lets all of us who are here right now agree that Birch Lake summers are extraordinary, marvelous, and wonderful experiences, and that whatever our ages we're going to live every one we're blessed with "in the moment," paying attention to right now, savoring every spoonful.

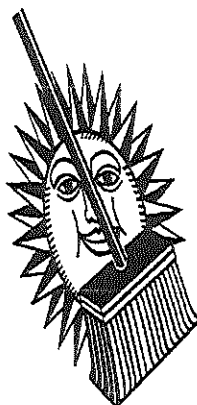
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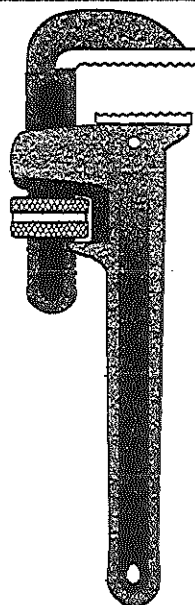
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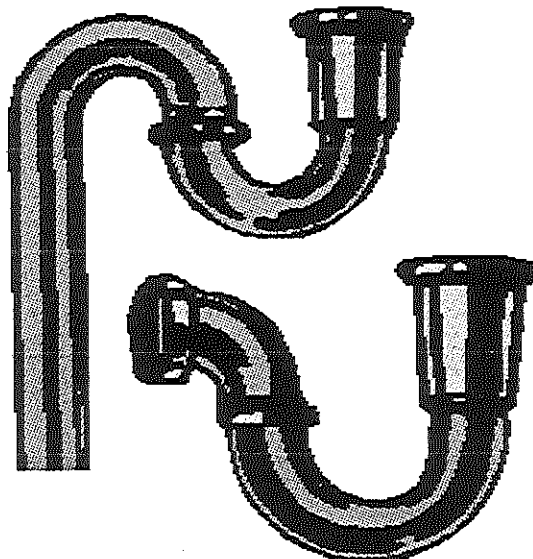
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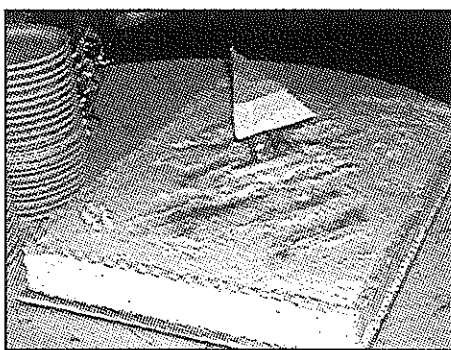
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# 2003 Spring Dinner



All photos courtesy  
of the now-famous  
PattiCam





Special thanks to the Birch Lake Thespian troupe ... and to all of the friends and family who helped us set up and clean up. Now, on to SUMMER!



And don't miss the Camp's open house this Sunday form 1-4 pm

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# Barker Classified Advertising

Birch Barker Classified ads are free for all BLYC members and their families.

## FOR SALE

Starcraft steel fishing boat with 9.9 hp motor. \$100 takes it all. Call Phil at 476-1680; see it at 63174 Birch Rd. (east side).

Small microwave oven. Perfect for the lake. \$20. Large microwave oven. Perfect for the lake. \$45 OBO on either. Call Stewart Spratt at 476-2113.

## WANTED TO BUY

Looking for used wakeboard preferably a beginners board, with bindings included. (574) 272-3683

My family is new to Birch Lake, and we are looking for a recreational (ski) type boat. If you are thinking of upgrading or selling your boat, please contact the Carmen Soldato Family

Wanted: small boat trailer. Call 476-1680.

## SERVICES

Housecleaning service: Call Shanna at (269) 501-9379. I'm located on the south side and I am available to clean your home weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or seasonally.

Babysitting: Call Shanna on the south side of Birch Lake at (269)501-9379.

## RENTALS

East Side A-Frame for rent in June. Three bedrooms, great neighbors. Lots of great summer weeks available; \$800/week. Call Marc at (574) 247-1062.

North Shore cottage for rent, June-September.

Sleeps six. \$850 per week. Contact Fred Freihofer at (574) 272-3683 or [ffreihofer@aol.com](mailto:ffreihofer@aol.com).

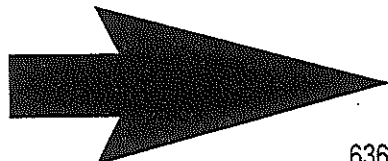
3 BR cottage on north shore. \$650.00/week. Discounts available. Call Stewart Spratt at 574.291.3227 or 269.476.2113.

WANTED - summer cottage rental for 1 month. Please call with leads, thanks!!! Mark and Christine Werkema, Granger, IN; Phone 574-243-9333.

To submit an ad for the Barker, e-mail your ad to [sailorphil@philvitale.com](mailto:sailorphil@philvitale.com), mail it to: Phil Vitale, 63174 Birch Rd, Vandalia, MI 49095 or put it in the red "Barker" box at that address (on the east side). Ads are \$5/week for non-members

# 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)
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