

# Birch Barker

Weekend of May 29, 2004

## Spring comes with a fury to Birch Lake of storms



Either Don Harman is researching new ways to reduce hull drag or the wind took Ole Blue for a ride again

### COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

**W**elcome back my friends to the show that never ends. I'm so glad you could attend after the long fall/winter/spring. Good to see everyone back.

It was also good to see everyone that attended the spring dinner. The turnout was great and there were lots of compliments on the entertainment - magician Kevin Wilson and Duayne Gundy and his band. If anyone would like to have either of these folks entertain at a function please let me know and I can put you in touch. Thanks to all those (Bob King) who helped with last week's Yacht Club clean up. Having no power though we only cleaned up outside. Perhaps we can handle the inside as part of next week's

directors meeting. It goes much faster with more hands. Also thank you to the chain gang that showed up for he road cleanup ... Dick Bender, Rick Russwurm, Jim and Deb Bolinger, Bob and Calvin King, Phil, Sandy and Erica Vitale, Steve Richards, Marty and Doris Sante. Hope I didn't overlook anyone.

As always, there are a number of fun events planned for the summer. The next one on the agenda is the Commodore's party - A Night at the Races on June 12th. Also look forward to The Great Tube Float in July - details to come as we near the date. We are working on some events for kids too. And we are always looking for volunteers to assist with not just kids events, but all events. We can use folks to help set up, tend bar, clean up, etc. Please contact me or John Erhardt if you'd like to help. Enjoy your long weekend

and lets have a great summer. And make it a safe one.

-Stewart Spratt, Commodore 2004

### Updated Calendar

- June 5 - Directors Meeting; 9 am
- June 12 - Commodore's party - A Night at the Races
- June 26 - Vice Commodore party
- July 3 - Boat parade
- July 3 - Fireworks
- July 4 - Fireworks clean up
- July 4 - Pancake breakfast
- July 17 - Party TBA
- July 28 - Women's tea
- July 30 - Men's golf outing
- July 31 - Garage sale
- July 31 - The Great Tube Float
- Aug. 6 - Women's golf outing
- Aug. 7 - Corn and sausage roast
- Aug. 21 - Fall dinner

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

We are always 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, 120 So. Broadway, Cassopolis, MI 49031, or fax your items to (269) 445-9200. To contact me by phone, call 476-1680 or (269) 445-9200.

# Birch Lake Notes



## Congrats to Rick and Tish



Andrew Harman was born on May 2, 2004 to Rick and Tish Harman. Rick is the son of Don and Lind Harman (east side). Mom and baby are doing well. Congrats!

### Sailing News

Sorry folks, as of deadline I still haven't heard anything about plans for a Memorial Day Regatta.

My best advice is to watch the lake on Sunday and Monday for signs of the marks being set out, then show up wherever you see a starting line.

## More storm damage

Last weekend's storm was a bit more destructive than simply flipping a boat or two ... as you can see from this

photo of Dan Reynolds' garage on the south side.

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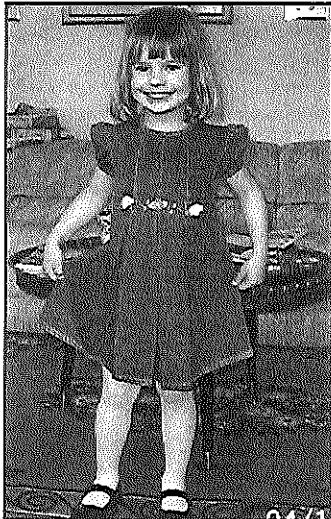
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## Have A Safe and Fun Summer!

# Birch Lake Notes

Belated happy birthday to Claire Brovold



Those of us who never had kids (until now) never knew how fast life was passing us by. Look how much they grow in only 4 years. We look forward to each and every day!

-Gary & Karen Brovold

Safety folder to be delivered to cottages

Beginning this weekend the Safety Committee

## News from the Cove

By **SUNNY WATERS** and her Beloved Spouse that gorgeous hunk

Because of my ongoing efforts at keeping the cottage neat and sound, my weekly wisdom was late and I wasn't up to writing a columnful of bon mots (Lindsey Weesner told me that's "good words" for all of you French-challenged readers); I hope my dear friends (and editors) will kindly understand.

If you have no interest, anyway, jump in your car and look for a good movie ... grab a big

bag of cheeseburgers (Coke is free)...or I might wisely suggest the wisdom of the latrine (doesn't that just give you wisdom and pride?).

Hopefully next week's blah will impress you more, B.S. (as most of you know, BS is my ever loving, Beloved Spouse).

**Some things to consider:**

1. Veni, Vidi, Visa (I came, I saw, I went shopping)
2. You can get shoes for 85 cents at bowling alleys
3. It is better to have loved and lost a short

person than never to have a tall

Bruce, dear, I've never been inebriated, just over-served. Please continue munching those popup toaster tarts.

And BS, don't use my toothbrush! Call Gilbert Eberhart.

For those of you who are dying to meet me, don't forget to attend the pancake breakfast on the Fourth of July ... I'll be there and saying NICE (yes, NICE) things.

Hope all of you enjoy a great summer; see you next week!

-Sunny Waters

and volunteers will be distributing a folder containing Michigan boating and safety information for adults and kids. It has listings for rainy day entertainment and emergency information numbers. It also has a Cass

County map with restaurants and golf courses.

Last year the Safety Committee provided these folders to rental cottages for their guests. This year the Homeowners Assoc. is funding a copy for each cottage. If you have ques-

tions please call David Bouwkamp at 476-1001.

-Safety Committee

Lose a boat?

A loose fishing boat has been hanging out for several days by Cottage 1 near the landing.

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Welcome back my fr...wait a minute...that other guy already did that...lousy plagiarist. Anyway, this show really does never end. So what's going on up there now? Two comets possibly bright enough to see with the unaided eye appear in the night sky. Comet NEAT is high in the west as darkness falls, to the right of the Moon. Binoculars will help you find it. A second comet, LINEAR, is just climbing into view just above the west-southwest horizon.

Like all comets, NEAT and LINEAR are big balls of frozen water and gas mixed with solid particles of rock. The comet itself is sometimes referred to as the nucleus. As it approaches the Sun, some of its ice vaporizes, which also releases tiny grains and pebbles of rock. This material forms a bright, glowing cloud around the comet, called a coma. It can span several hundred thousand miles, and makes the nucleus difficult to see and measure. (Most comets are no more than a few miles in diameter.) Finally, solar radiation and the solar wind (a steady flow of electrically charged particles from the Sun) push the gas and dust away

from the comet, creating a tail that can stretch for millions of miles. And the tail doesn't always follow the comet. As the comet nears the sun and makes its turn, the tail will shift a bit so that it is pointing away from the sun. After the comet is far enough away from the sun the tail will again follow the nucleus.

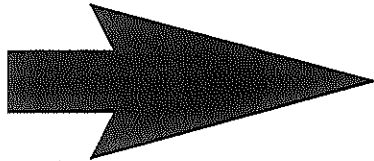
Astronomers believe that both NEAT and LINEAR are making their first trips through the inner solar system. They probably resided in the Oort Cloud, a spherical shell of comets that surround the solar system, for more than four billion years. A passing star or other disturbance nudged them from their orbits and caused them to fall toward the sun.

So tonight about an hour and a half after sunset, use your binoculars to scan the west-southwest horizon for LINEAR. Look high in the west for NEAT. And as always, enjoy the show. It's free.

-Stu Spratt

# 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 Fund
- \$ \_\_\_ - Water Quality Program
- \$ \_\_\_ - Riparian (\$7/yr, provide address for magazine)
- \$ \_\_\_ - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- \$ \_\_\_



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## Off the page

by **Marian**  
(the librarian)

Summer, what a great time to catch up on all of that reading we didn't have time for this winter. I don't know about you, but I keep putting off all of the really big, juicy books so I can savor them at the end of my pier. This is also the time of year when I reread some of my favorites and not feel guilty about not being productive.

Here are some of the books I have read over previous summers:

■ **The Hobbit**, you have to start with The Hobbit before you move onto the Lord of the Rings trilogy.

■ **Seabiscuit** Laura Hillenbrand describes the grim realities of the horse race industry that were much more interesting than the actual storyline you saw in the movie.

■ **Centennial** is my favorite James Michener book, although any of his books are good summer reading. I do admit to skipping the first chapter though

■ **The Secret Life of Bees** by Sue Monk Kidd was an easy but fun read.

■ **The Divine Secret of the Ya Ya Sisterhood**. The movie really screwed up this story. It's scary but the parties of Sidra's childhood reminded me a so much of my parent's group.

This winter I was introduced to the Cass County Public Library in Cassopolis, a beautiful library. It was only a 15 minute drive and their book collection was well worth the trip. You may want to look into obtaining a library card. Their phone number is 445-3400.

If you have reading suggestions please email them to our editor, Phil at [SailorPhil@philvital.com](mailto:SailorPhil@philvital.com)

Here's what's on my reading list:  
**HIDDEN PREY.**

by John Sandford

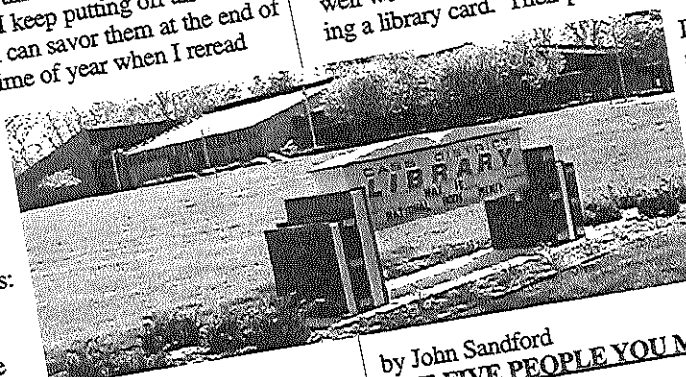
**THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN**, by Mitch Albom

**THE NARROWS**, by Michael Connelly

Next weeks topic: Good mystery and true crime books.

See you next week ... and remember,

"shhhhhhh!"



## June 7-13 is Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness Week

Michigan has declared June 7-13 as the second annual Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness Week in an effort to raise awareness about the prevention and control of species like the zebra mussel, Eurasian water-milfoil, purple loosestrife, round goby and ruffe in Michigan lakes. An aquatic invasive species is defined as a waterborne, non-native organism that threatens the diversity or abundance of native species, the ecological stability of impacted waters, or threatens commercial, agricultural, aquacultural or recreational activities.

A special focus this will be the potential threat of hydrilla, an aggressive, aquatic plant. So far, biologists have found on evidence of hydrilla in Michigan's inland lakes and streams,

but the level of concern for ecological damage has increased due to the fact that hydrilla is known to exist in New York and Pennsylvania. You can find out how to join the hydrilla hunt by visiting [www.miseagrant.umich.edu/ans](http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/ans).

Here are steps to take to help prevent future invasions and spread of AIS:

1. Remove visible mud, plants, fish or animals from boats, trailers and equipment before transport the boat to another lake.
2. Wash boats and trailers with a power washer whenever available.
3. Eliminate all water before transport.
4. Clean and dry anything that comes in contact with water (boats, trailers, clothing, dogs, etc.)
5. Drain water from motor, livewell, bilge and

transom wells at the ramp or access before leaving a lake.

6. Put a capful of detergent in your boat's bilge and rinse it out on land.
7. Never release plants, fish or animals into a lake unless they came from that lake.
8. Learn to recognize the appearance and characteristics of aquatic invasive species.
9. Destroy any aquatic invasive species when discovered and dispose in trash.
10. Report unusual fish or plants to (517) 335-4056 or check out the Web site [www.michigan.gov/deqaquaticinvasives](http://www.michigan.gov/deqaquaticinvasives)

submitted by Phil Vitale  
BLYC Water Quality Committee member

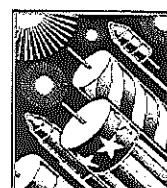
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