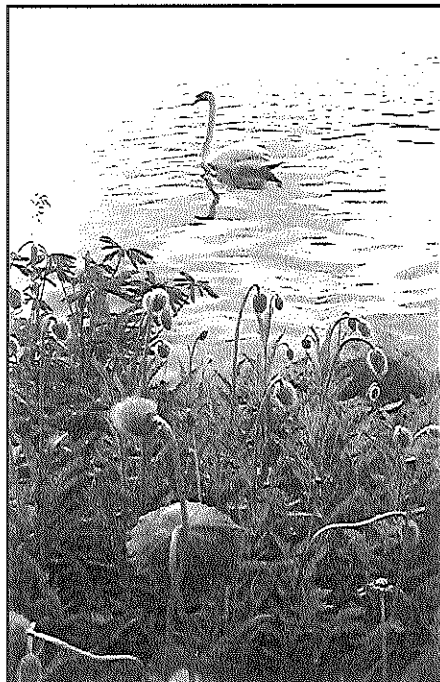


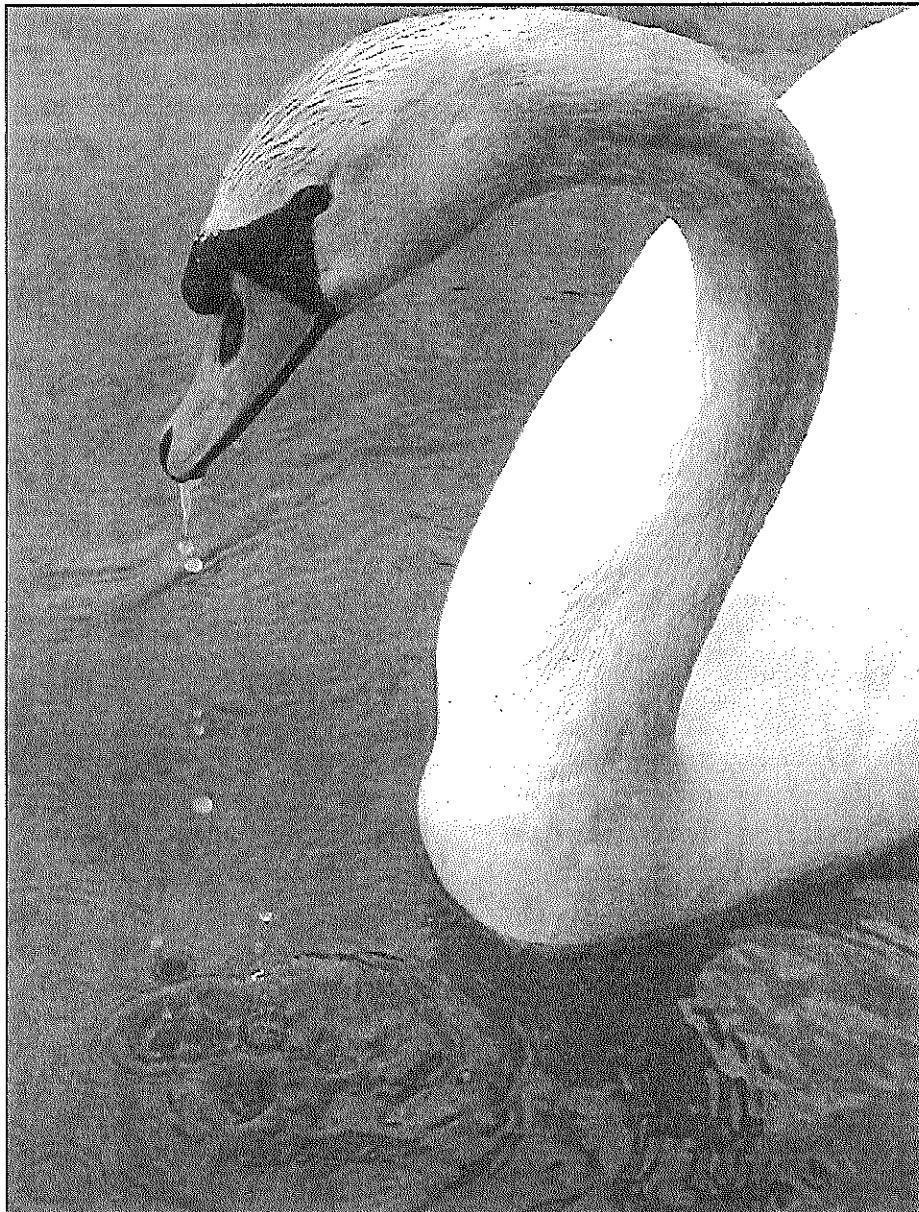
# Birch Barker

Weekend of June 5, 2004

## SWAN



Barker photos by DARLENE TROYER



In case you missed it, a swan visited Birch Lake recently and entertained the residents of the Northeast corner for several days, tamely accepting handouts and posing for these great photos ...

### COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

**A**nd we're off. Summer is officially underway and we're heading down the front stretch toward the first turn in our race to the finish on Labor Day weekend. Our first Birch Barker was put together by Phil Vitale and delivered by Charlene Sheetz, Margaret Bouwkamp, Holly Troeger, Judy Olson, Linda Curtis, Elaine Lochmandy, Vickie Rogers, and Linda and Buzz Rasmussen. Thank you so much. Also thanks to Fred Friehofer for helping me. A former long-time Birch Lake resi-

dent that many of you may have known passed away last week. Joe Meyers lived on the east side with his wife Bert, daughters Carol and Barb, and son Dean. Joe moved here in the late '50s/early '60's. Our thoughts are with his family.

Did everyone receive the great publication put together by our Safety Committee? It contains lots of good information for visitors and renters. A copy should be prominently displayed in everyone's home. How about a big round of applause for the Safety Committee.

One of the items in the safety publication is the Michigan Boating Laws pamphlet. An incident I observed a cou-

ple of times last weekend sparked conversation and prompted us to consult the book. A boat was spotted traveling at high speed and folks commented that he was speeding. I was interested to learn that there is a speed limit of 55 miles per hour on Michigan waterways when it is safe. Let's all use our heads on this one.

Don't forget the directors meeting today at 9 a.m, and don't forget to tune in to the Belmont Stakes this afternoon. And speaking of horse racing, page 2 has info on next weekend's 'A Night at the Races.' Have a swell weekend. Go Smarty Jones.

-Stewart Spratt, Commodore 2004

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](mailto: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.

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

# Birch Lake Notes

You'll be off to the races at 2004  
BLYC Commodore's Party

And down the stretch they come! If you liked last year's Monte Carlo night you'll like this year's program, A Nite at the Races. A card of 6 thoroughbred races will be presented. Betting windows will allow each participant the opportunity to WIN some prizes, PLACE your bets and SHOW your racing knowledge and skill (or luck).

The object is simple: Select an entry in each race that you think will be the

winner. The betting will be for WIN only.

The names of the entries on the Official Souvenir Program are fictitious. All bets will be \$2 (play money to be purchased at the door — not my idea, contact Ms. Grandholm) but you can purchase as many tickets as you desire.

Payoffs will also be made in play money which can be used to bid on prizes at the auction table at the end of the evening. Prizes will consist of gift cards/certificates from local businesses.

All of the races have been filmed at

accredited tracks throughout the world in rich color and sound. In addition to WIN betting, exotic betting will be offered in the form of Daily Double, Quinella, Exacta and more.

I could use several volunteers to man the mutuel betting windows, make payouts, run the projector, etc. Please contact me at 476-2113 or 574.291.3227. I'm looking forward to a great time. Go Smarty Jones.

-Stewart Spratt

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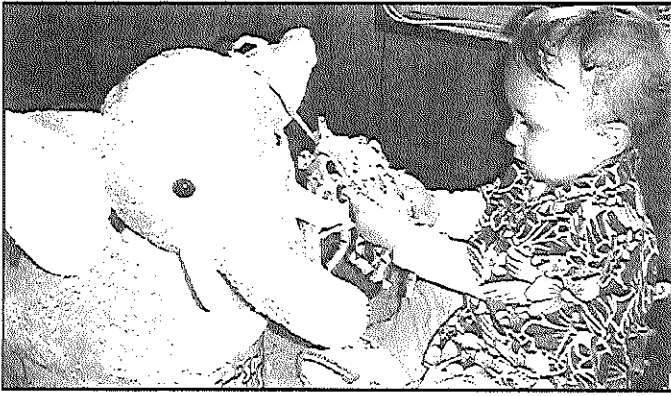
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**Have A Safe and Fun Summer!**

# Barker Kid of the Week



Davis Olson, son of Jeff and Beth Olson (grandson of Judy and Dave Olson and Phyllis and Dean Davis) celebrated his first birthday with a Babar look-alike at Birch Lake on May 30, 2004.

Please send your news to the Birch Barker at sailorphil@philvitale.com

## BLYC 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

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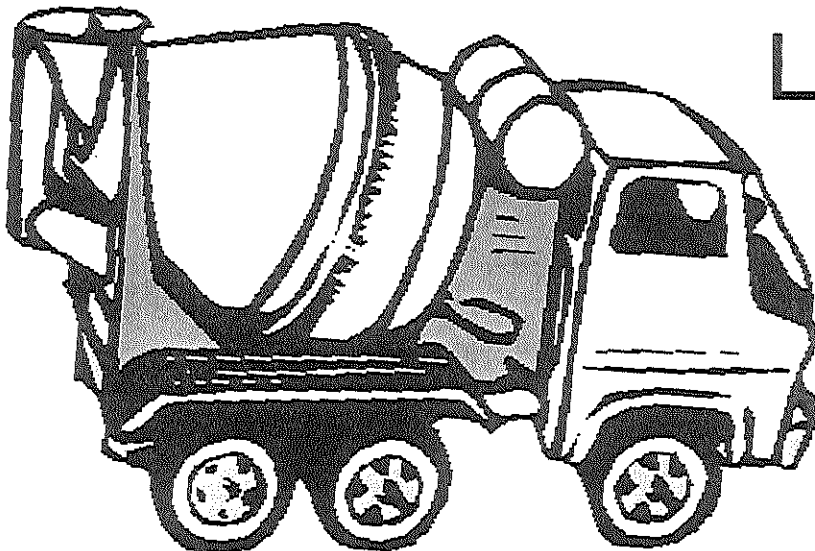
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## Stu's Star Stuff



**C**assiopeia, the queen, rides her throne across the northwestern sky on spring evenings such as these. As darkness falls, she's almost due northwest, to the lower left of the pole star, Polaris. She wheels below Polaris by around midnight.

The constellation's brightest stars form a bright letter M or W, depending on how you look at it. When Cassiopeia's above the pole star, standing highest in the sky, the stars form a W. But when it's below the pole, they look more like an M.

Cassiopeia sits on her throne. But as she rotates around Polaris, she sometimes appears to hang upside down. And at other times, she's more or less standing on her ear. These undignified poses are part of Cassiopeia's punishment for offending the gods.

In ancient mythology, Cassiopeia was the beautiful wife of King Cepheus, who has his own constellation. More on that another time. But Cassiopeia was also vain. She boasted that she was the most

beautiful of women. But the Nereids -- the lovely daughters of the sea god -- took umbrage. They asked their father to punish Cassiopeia for her boasting.

He did, and Cassiopeia's daughter, Andromeda, was offered as a sacrifice to Cetus, the sea monster. Ultimately, Andromeda was rescued. But Cassiopeia had another bit of punishment coming her way. She was banished to her throne, which was placed in the stars. Cassiopeia must forever endure the embarrassment of sometimes standing on her ear as she moves across the sky. Look for Cassiopeia by following the pointer stars of the Big Dipper to the North Star. Continue on that line until you find the W or M. Imagine the beautiful Queen atop her throne and gazing at her image in her hand mirror. Until next week, enjoy the show. It's free.

-Stu Spratt

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## Off the page

by **Marian**  
(the librarian)

I finally had a minute to sit at the end of the pier last night. What a treat. I do admit that I didn't have book but if I did...

My favorite genre of books would be true crime and fictional mysteries. Ones I hope to read again would include:

Ø **The Da Vinci Code** (Brown). Remember it is fiction, but it was read like non-fiction.

Ø **Small Sacrifices** (Rule). She can write a true crime book like no one else.

Ø **Fatal Vision** (McGinniss). Isn't the good doctor still claiming his innocence?

Ø **A Time To Kill** (Grisham). My favorite Grisham book. A fictional crime but it had me at the edge of my seat.

Ø **Curtain** (Christie).

Really any title of hers is fun. I feel so smart when I figure out the murderer before the end of the book.

Next weeks topic: Good mystery and true crime books.

Here's what's on my personal reading list:

**2nd CHANCE** by James Patterson

**PIS FOR PERIL** by Sue Grafton

**THROUGH THE WINDOW: The Terrifying True Story of Cross-Country Killer Tommy Lynn Sells** by Diane Fanning



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

# NTSB to host forum on PFD use

The National Transportation Safety Board will hold a public forum to discuss **mandatory wear of personal flotation devices (PFD) on all recreational boats**, NTSB Chairman Ellen Engleman Connors has announced. The one-day forum will begin at 9 am on August 25, 2004 at the NTSB Academy in Ashburn, VA.

The purpose of the forum is to gather data and to promote an open and informative discussion of policy issues related to mandatory PFD use. It has been on the Board's "Most Wanted" list of transportation safety improvements since its inception in 1990.

"The Board has made a solid commitment to advance recreational boating safety by all means available to our agency," said Chairman Engleman Connors. "A public forum will be an excellent mechanism to bring together agencies and organizations to identify solutions that will improve public safety in recreational boating."

Some of the issues discussed at the forum will be:

- New PFD technology
- Alternatives to mandatory wear rules
- The impact of federal and/or state legislation mandating wearing of PFDs on recreational boats
- Various vessels and type of operation that should be included in or exempted from mandatory wear rules

Coast Guard statistics show that 750 boaters died in

2002. Eighty-five percent of those who drowned were not wearing PFDs, even though in many cases, PFDs were aboard. These statistics have been consistent from year to year, and Coast Guard statistics show that approximately 450 lives could be saved each year if the victims wore PFDs.

The Safety Board wants to build on this information and other data available to evaluate the safety benefits of mandatory wearing of PFDs on recreational boating. Currently, most states require PFD wear for children and for personal watercraft operators. No state requires PFD wear for all occupants. Yet six years of observational studies by the Coast Guard show that less than 5 percent of adults in open boats wear PFDs.

According to the NTSB website, due to limited resources, they do not respond to unsolicited e-mails, but comments can be mailed to:

Chairman Ellen Engleman Connors  
National Transportation Safety Board  
NTSB Headquarters  
490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Washington, DC 20594

-submitted by Bob King

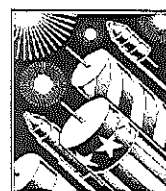
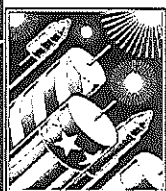
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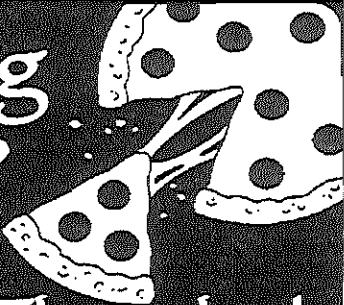
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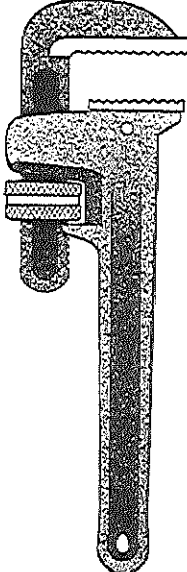
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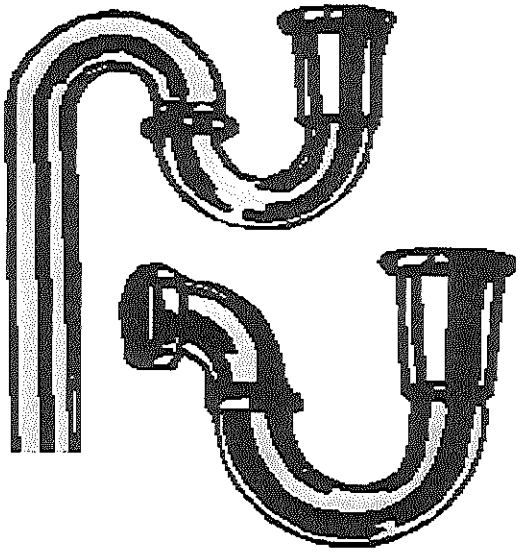
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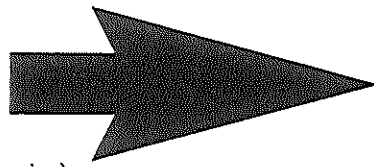
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## Birch Lake Management Program - BLYC Water Quality Committee

The Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program Annual Summary Report for 2003 has been received by the Water Quality Committee. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has determined that Birch Lake is among the cleanest lakes in the state. Birch Lake is an Oligotrophic lake — top quality.

Secchi disk transparency is considered a snapshot of the lake's clarity. According to Carlson's Trophic State Index, a lake is Oligotrophic if a Secchi disk can be seen in a range from 50 feet to 16 feet.

In 2003 Birch Lake's maximum clarity was 33 feet. The first test of 2004 was taken in May, in the 95-foot deep basin. Birch Lake reached an all-time high of 43 feet. It is truly amazing to watch an 8-inch-diameter, black-and-white disk reduce to a tiny white bow tie at the same time that the sun appears from behind the cloud, pierces through the column of water and lights up with one quick touch: 43 feet into its depth!!! Birch Lake is a *beauty*.

**Phosphorus** is a key nutrient affecting the amount of algae and weed growth in Birch Lake. A low level of productivity coincides with a high level of oxygen, which is a contributing factor in the lake's Oligotrophic state. Since 1989, Birch Lake's phosphorous level has consistently tested low, another factory in the excellent readings.

**Chlorophyll** measured 1.4 (ug/l) in June of 2003. Chlorophyll is the beast within the algae. The beast

does not exist at Birch Lake. To be considered Oligotrophic, the level on the Trophic State Index must be between 0.5 to 2 (ug/l). The numbers then increase from 3 to 10 for Mesotrophic, then up to 40 for Eutrophic, and 150 for Hypereutrophic. Eutrophic lakes have little or no dissolved oxygen and extremely high algae growth.


Maintain your septic and pump at least every three years. Septics no longer seep phosphorus into Birch Lake; therefore chlorophyll remains low. The excellent condition of the lake attests to the success of the septic upgrade program.

Reduce phosphorus runoff. It is recommended that you use a pump to fertilize your lawn with lake water. At Birch Lake a fertilizer bag should read "0-0-0." An alternative bag can be purchased from Bob Temple, 14757 Kiloqua Woods, phone 476-2773. A 50-pound bag costs \$10 and reads: "23 Nitrogen for leaf growth; 0 Phosphorus; 30 Potash for root growth."

And now a word from Birch Lake:

*If just outside your lakefront door  
Your lawn is like your beach  
Just remember, my front shore  
Is just within its reach*

-submitted by *Gertie Temple*




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