

# Birch Barker

Weekend of June 12, 2004



## Here Comes Summer!



### let's make this summer a safe summer!



A new Water Safety sign has been erected at the public landing (compliments of the Birch Lake Homeowners Association), advising boaters of the safety issues at the lake.

#### COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

I'm told that it was a lovely weekend at the lake. I don't know because I spent most of it in town. Cutting the grass and attending the summer's first board of directors meeting was all I accomplished. This weekend will be different.

Many things were discussed at the board meeting. So far yacht club membership has reached 71. Many have made generous donations to the fireworks fund. Lots of great comments have been made about the pamphlet put together by our Safety Committee - Dave and Margaret Bouwkamp, Howard Blackwood and Dan Covey and funded by the Home Owners Association. The Safety Committee will arrange to conduct the boat inspection again this year. Watch for details. And I'd like to remind everyone that board meetings are open to anyone that wants to attend. The next one is scheduled for July 10th at 9:00am.

Arrangements are being made to replace the boat storage structure at Camp Tannadoonah. Terry Keim has offered to donate labor and the yacht club will assist with materials.

Several folks have asked about using the yacht club for various functions. The yacht club is available to members for their use. If you want to use the yacht club please contact me again and remind me of the dates. I don't believe I have any conflicts but I've misplaced my notes on this one. My apologies.

Thanks again to our Barker delivery folks. One challenge still remains though. If anyone could assist with getting the Barker into the hands of the delivery people I would appreciate a call. It needs to be picked up at Staples by Scottsdale mall each Friday and brought to the lake. Please let me know if you can help out. Even if it's just now and then. Also, my apologies if anyone did not receive a Barker. Let me know that too and I'll try to make sure you aren't overlooked again. Anyone having news items they'd like to share please submit them to Phil Vitale. He's looking for any kind of contributions to print.

Don't forget tonight's commodore's party - A Nite at the Races starting at 7:00pm. If you'd like to help out by tending bar, helping with set up, selling tickets, etc...please contact me. See inside for more details.

Let's get out there and have some fun.

#### BLYC Calendar

- June 12 - Commodore's party - A Night at the Races
- June 19 - Kids event 10 am
- June 26 - Vice Commodore party
- July 3 - Boat parade
- July 3 - Fireworks
- July 4 - Fireworks clean up
- July 4 - Pancake breakfast
- July 10 - Directors meeting: 9 am
- 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. 15 - Directors meeting: 9 am
- Aug. 21 - Fall dinner

Make it a great weekend. Bummer about Smarty Jones.

-Stewart Spratt, Commodore 2004

We are always soliciting and accepting materials for future publication. Just e-mail the info to me at [sailorphil@philvitale.com](mailto:sailorphil@philvitale.com), or, if you must, put the materials in the red Barker box at 63174 Birch Rd. (East Shore), 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

## ATTENTION ALL KIDS

Join us for Kids Craft Day at the Birch Lake Yacht Club. Saturday, June 19, from 10am-11:30am (IN time). Don't tell Dad...but we'll be making Father's Day gifts to help make his day special!! See you then!

Any questions, please call Paula Russell at 476-1880.

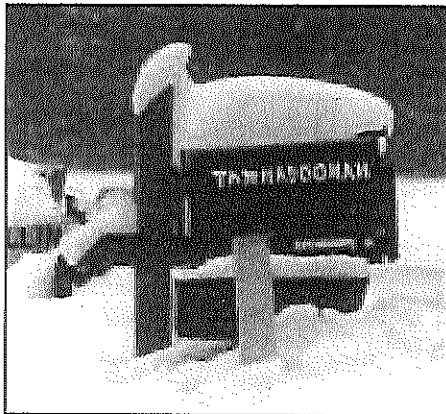
## Walker graduates from Colorado State

Caleb Walker is home for the summer after his graduation from Colorado State University. Future plans include graduate work in neuroanatomy and entry into veterinary school. He is working for Dowagiac Animal Hospital again this summer and enjoying his romance with fellow Birch Laker and long time friend Kyla Scofield.

The Walkers' have been hosting two young missionary men for the past two weeks. They have enjoyed lots of Nancy's cooking, boating, tubing, attempts at skiing, and have fallen in love with Birch Lake.

## Eat with the Campers at Tannadoonah

At the Spring Dinner, Mr. Dug invited Birch Laker to again "Eat with the Campers" on Monday evenings this summer. The evening begins at 5:45 at the flagpole for the lowering of the flag and



Mr. Dug promises that if you come to dinner, the staff will have the snow cleared away ...

continues on to the dining room for the meal. Afterwards, there are Camp announcements and singing. The Birch Laker's who have attended in previous years have enjoyed the experience-- watching the campers and reminiscing on their own past camping days.

"Eat with the Campers" will begin June 21 and continue each Monday thru August 2. Please call Judy Olson, 476-2125 or Mr. Dug at Camp, 476-2177 to make your reservation.

## Tom's taking recyclable metal

Tom's Garage has announced that

they are now accepting recyclable metals from lake residents. For more information contact Tom, Bettie or Becky at 476-2272.

## Aerial photos for sale

Beautiful, color aerial photos of Birch Lake (taken last summer) will be available for purchase beginning this weekend. The photos are suitable for framing, and the price will depend on the total number of prints ordered. A sample photo will be on display at tonight's Commodore's Party at the club.

## Safety Flags still available

There are still a limited number of yellow "skier-down" safety flags available for sale at \$5 each. Contact Fred Freihofer at 476-9823 or 574-272-3683.

Users are reminded that when a skier falls, the spotter should raise the flag, but don't wave it ... waving the flag seems to attract attention from well-intentioned boaters who, mistakenly thinking the flag is signalling distress, try to approach.

## Birch Lake Towels available

There are also a limited number of Birch Lake towels for sale. For information, contact Denise Smitley at 476-9000.

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**Have A Safe and Fun Summer!**

# Swimmer's itch/What it is, does and how to prevent (and treat) the seasonal itch

The technical name for swimmer's itch is cercarial dermatitis. Swimmer's itch is a patchy red pinpoint skin rash associated with itching on the parts of the body that have been in the water. Swimmer's itch is usually not severe. After the initial transient itching it will disappear without treatment. The itching occurs within 48 hours and may last up to 7 days. Rarely, it can be severe if a large proportion of the body is affected. The major, although not the only, cause of swimmer's itch are trematode parasites of aquatic/migrating birds. The life cycles of these parasites involve snails as the first host and aquatic birds or some mammals as the final host.

The larval parasite called a "cercaria" is released by snails and causes dermatitis when it mistakenly penetrates a person's skin rather than

its rightful host, usually a duck.

Common lore is that this is caused by "duck fleas" in freshwater — this is incorrect. Trematode parasites cause the freshwater swimmer's itch.

At one time or other in the past 70 years, since its major cause was first identified in Douglas Lake, Michigan, swimmer's itch has been reported in almost every country in the world.

Swimmer's itch occurs the water temperature reaches the appropriate level for snails to reproduce and grow rapidly, and when migrating aquatic birds infected with the parasite return from their winter habitats or domesticated aquatic birds return to full activity.

Specific diagnosis is difficult. There is no widely available blood test that gives specific indication that cercaria have caused the itching. The best confirmation of the cause is

based on knowing from other people that swimmer's itch occurs in the place where one swam or entered the water.

Treatment may not be necessary when there are only a few itching spots. An antihistaminic or mild corticosteroid cream purchased over the counter in pharmacies can be beneficial. If the initial itching is severe, then scratching can cause abrasions and skin infections may develop. If the symptoms persist for longer than 3 days, a dermatologist should be seen. Prescription medications may help reduce the itching.

Here are some tips to prevent swimmer's itch:

- avoid swimming for long periods in shallow water
- avoid swimming in areas where swimmer's itch is a problem and where there is an onshore wind
- towel off immediately after leaving the water may help reducing swim-

mer's itch caused by cercariae of some species that enter only as the water dries on the skin

- do not encourage birds to stay in your area by feeding them
- avoid placing rip-rap on your shore. This provides an excellent surface for certain species of snails to attach their eggs. The higher the number of snails, the greater the chance for swimmer's itch.

*Editor's Note: As usual, after a weekend of spring fun at Birch Lake, I (and several members of my family) are once again suffering with the dreaded swimmer's itch. Even though we print this info every year, a lot of people remain oblivious ... be advised that the condition is relatively harmless (although quite a nuisance for a week or so), and the parasite that causes it almost always disappears in a couple of weeks.*

-pv


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## Accents & Images

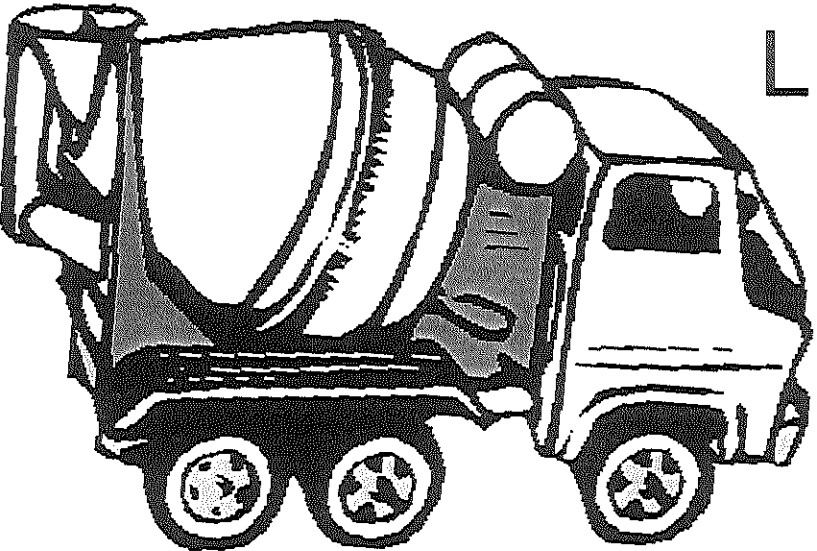
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# Stu's Star Stuff



A rare astronomical event occurred on Tuesday morning. Did you see it? No, Stu. You didn't tell us about it. Oops, sorry. My bad.

Early risers in the eastern United States had a chance to view a rare astronomical event on Tuesday ... a transit of the planet Venus across the face of the Sun. Venus appeared as a black dot against the bright solar disk.

The last transit took place in 1882. Venus transits occur in pairs, with the second transit coming eight years after the first. But it's more than a century between pairs.

The transits of the 18th and 19th cen-

turies were among the most intensely studied astronomical events in history.

Astronomers used the transits to measure the distance from Earth to the Sun. By viewing the transits from different points on Earth, astronomers saw Venus at slightly different angles against the Sun. By calculating those angles, they determined the Sun's distance to within a hundred thousand miles.

Today, astronomers know the distance to the Sun with high precision, so the transit has less scientific interest. But it's still a rare event. It began at 12:13 a.m. Central Time, when Venus first appeared to touch the Sun's disk. It ended more than six hours later. The

best views came from Asia, Europe, and Africa.


From the eastern United States, the transit was underway as the Sun rose, and ended shortly thereafter. If you missed it you can watch the entire transit on the web. One site you can try is stardate.org.

Next week we'll talk about something you can actually see. For now though, continue to enjoy the show. It's free you know.

-Stu Spratt

The moon for June 12, 2004  
(at Midnight) 3.5 days after last quarter;  
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## Off the page

by Marian  
(the librarian)

Friday nights on Birch Lake are usually a time to relax and unwind after a hectic week, but this past Friday that had to wait. Anticipation and excitement bubbled inside me and my four companions as we continued our tradition and went to the last showing on opening night of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. It was a very entertaining movie but of course the book was better. That got me to thinking about other movies that were based on books. Here are a few of my favorites:

■ To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee. I have to admit that I liked the movie as well as I liked the book.

■ The Pelican Brief by John Grisham. Both the book and the movie were thrilling.

■ Princess Bride by William Goldman. Such fun!

## ■ The Green Mile

by Stephen King. I am not a Stephen King fan but I liked this story.

■ Silence of the Lambs by Thomas Harris. Where do they get these ideas from?

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

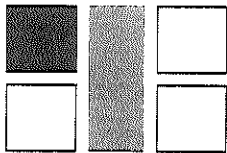
The Final Witness by Simon Tolkien

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

A Death in the Family by James Agee

*Next Week's topic: Fantasy and Science Fiction*

Please send in your favorite titles. You can email them to [SailorPhil@philvitale.com](mailto:SailorPhil@philvitale.com) or drop them off in the Birch Barker mailbox located on the east side, near our editor's home.



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

*-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak*

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# Win or place, but at least show up!

## Commodore's Party tonight!

And down the stretch they come! If you liked last year's Monte Carlo night you'll like this evening's program, A Nite at the Races. The fun starts at 7 pm when 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 and many exciting other items.

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 mutual betting windows, make payouts, run the projector, tend bar, etc. Please contact me at 476-2113 or 574.291.3227. I'm looking forward to a great time. Poor Smarty Jones.

-Stewart Spratt

## Men's Golf Outing

Friday, July 30 ~ Park Shore ~ 11 am  
4-man scramble ~ Shotgun start  
Prime rib dinner (follows) at BLYC  
Prizes, refreshments \$60/man. Sign up **NOW!**

Team Members:

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Send checks to Fred Freihofer,  
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Deadline: July 23



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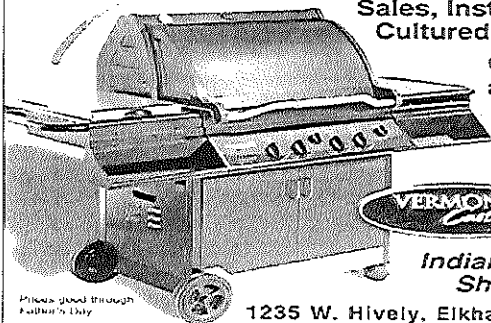
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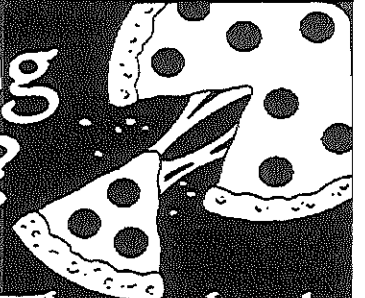
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# BLYC Sailing News



## Welcome Sailors!

For those who were anxious to get in a little pre-season practice, last Sunday proved to be a perfect sailing day. Winds were steady and a nice cloud cover kept temperatures mild. After the long winter, it was good to be back at the tiller.

Starting this Sunday, the 13th, we will begin the official season (weather permitting, of course!) Times will remain the

same as last year, 11 a.m. (IN) with a 1 p.m. alternate for weather or wind.

Sunfish sailors will again have two classes, "A" for more seasoned sailors, and "B" for beginners and those that are not yet comfortable enough for "A" class. You will need to select your class on your first race day and will remain in that class for the entire season.

The same will apply to

those who have boats of more than one type. You may sail in any class, but points will be awarded only in the class you choose on your first race day. In other words, if you own a Sunfish and an MC and choose to race in the Sunfish class, you can race in the MC class, but no points will be awarded to you on those days. Please feel free to call and discuss your class choice before racing if you like.

**IS THERE A SUNFISH LYING DORMANT AT YOUR HOUSE?**

Maybe, because no one knows how to use it? There has been some discussion about holding sailing classes this year. Anyone interested in learning, re-learning or increasing their present skills, please call 476-9737 and let me know. If there is enough interest, we will see if we can get something scheduled. There is nothing like the snap of the sail in the wind and a refreshing spray on your face as you zip across the lake!

See you tomorrow!

-Jim Bolinger



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Vice Comm John Erhardt .....476-1680	Judy Olson.....476-2125	Gertie Temple .....476-2773
Secretary - Sandy Vitale.....476-1680	Maryann O'Neill .....476-2831	Bob Temple.....476-2773
Treasurer - Holly Troeger .....476-9898	Vicki Rogers.....476-2383	Phil Vitale.....476-1680
Fleet Captain Dewayne Weaver n/a	Paula Russell.....476-1880	Sandy Vitale.....476-1680
Past Commodore Phil Vitale.....476-1680	Rick Russwurm.....476-2407	

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dick Bender .....476-2591	Charlene Sheetz.....476-2604
Howard Blackwood.....476-2840	Denise Smitley.....476-9000
Jim Bolinger.....476-9737	Holly Troeger .....476-9898
Dave Bouwkamp.....476-1001	Scott Troeger .....476-9898
Harold Cranmer .....476-2170	Sandy Vitale.....476-1680
Roger Falk.....no lake phone	Bruce Wagner .....476-2090
Fred Freihofer .....476-9823	Denny Weesner .....476-2569
Bob Herms.....476-9381	

## HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The 2004 officers of the homeowners Association are Scott Troeger, Jim Bolinger, Don Harman, Bill King and Rick Russwurm. There are dozens of members of the homeowners Association; contact any officer for more information. Homeowners Association meetings are publicized in the Barker and open to all members and prospective members.

## WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE

Dan Reynolds, chairman .....476-8877
Terry Dugan .....476-2814



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Kathy & Ron Niezgodski & Dorothy Parnell

*"Terry is extremely professional, accurate and meticulous and the work he does is top notch!"*

*"I was completely satisfied. The work was done quickly, efficiently and on time."*

Helen Toth

Dan Reynolds

## Don't get left in the wake

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**Terry Keirn**  
President



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## HELP WANTED

**Correspondents** — Want a challenge? Seeking adventure? Want a fast-paced, part-time job with potential for long-term commitment? Become a Birch Barker

Correspondent! No hidden fees, pay or overseas travel involved, but you'll earn tons of prestige and the undying admiration and the gratitude of your neighbors. All ages welcome to apply. Contact Phil at 476-1680.

## FOR RENT &/OR SALE

**For Rent** — Birch Lake North Shore \$850 wk. Multiple weeks discount. No pets. Sleeps 6. Nice

pier/swim raft. Boat lift available. Call Freihofer's at 574-272-3683 or 269-476-9823.

**For Rent** — Cottage for rent. Sleeps 6 in 3 bedrooms on beautiful north shore. \$700.00/week. Discounts available. Contact Stewart Spratt at 574.291.3227.

**For Sale** — Gastronomic

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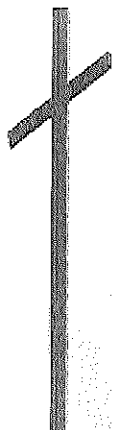
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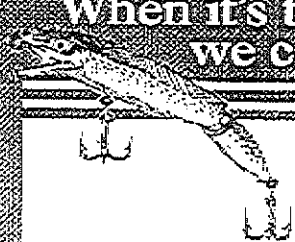
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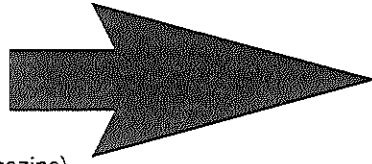
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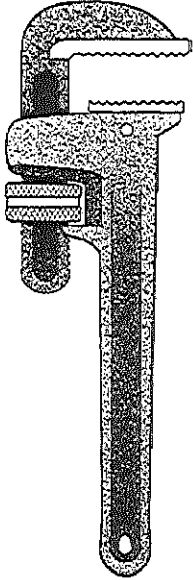


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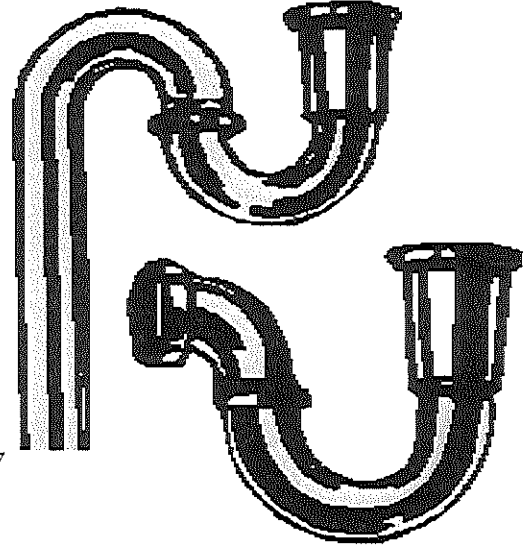
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