

Birch Barker

Weekend of August 28, 2004



BLYC Commodore John Erhardt, aka "Bug Guy," hosted a great party last Saturday ... see the photos inside!

photo by Bob King

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

I would like to take a minute to introduce myself to those of you that don't know me. I am John Erhardt. I have lived on the lake for 42 years. I graduated from Constantine High School. I have 2 older sisters and an older brother, all of whom truly enjoy the lake as much as WE all do!

Two years ago I married my wife Nyla, became a father of three, Randy, Ben and Luc. We were married right here on the lake, in our own front yard. What a beautiful day it was, shared by many of our Birch Lake Family!

The boys keep us very busy. I coach at least one of their baseball teams. I take them golfing, boating and swimming. We are always on the move. This year my wife discovered camping, and NOT at the Holiday Inn! We try to get a few weekends in but it is hard to leave the lake. Okay enough about me.

What a fall dinner (I hope you all were in attendance) that my wife put on with the spectacular help of Carrie Rogers' Chic Unique Eats Catering. Carrie and her assistant Julia Johnson pre-

pared a wonderful menu of oh-so-good food. Behind the bar were faithful bartenders Phil Vitale and Steve Richards. For the night entertainment we can thank Duane Gundy for taking off the tool belt and playing his music like he does so very well!

Along in the evening after dinner there was the changing of the flag, and announcing the new Vice Commodore. He is a 3rd generation Birch Laker, and a 2nd generation Commodore. He is none other than Ryan Gableman. Until last summer Ryan lived in what is now the Doba home (my boys still call it Johnny's house). He and his Beautiful wife of 2 months, Shanna, live in Dick Benders' rental home, not far from B.L.Y.C. He is a realtor in South Bend, and Shanna is an early elementary school teacher looking for a teaching position.

Darlene Troyer received the Commodore's award for all that she has done and always does for any of us on Birch Lake. She is very deserving of that award. Thank you Darlene for all you do! (Ken too).

There was one other very important title handed out to a very important person. We now have a real live Parking Attendant (with a bruised foot): Mr.

BLYC Calendar

- Aug. 28 - Board Meeting - 9 am
- Sept. 4 - Final Barker of the Season
- Sept. 5 - The Great Birch Lake Sandbar Stand - Noon
- Oct. 1 (or thereabouts) — First Online Barker of the Off-Season.

Robert (Bob) King. I gave the distinct job to the most capable person I could think of. However after giving Bob his new orange vest and saber light, his foot was run over, we will NOT mention names as to who did it! They know!

You will be receiving a postcard in the mail with the date of next year's events (with more to be added!) so you can mark your calendars and know that you will be busy on those dates! Have a great weekend and remember, be safe on the water and look out, my lovely wife may be driving the boat! Oh, no need to say more... She is learning. Splish Splashing away.

Your new Commodore,

-John Erhardt

The deadline for submitting Barker materials is every Tuesday at Noon!

We are always soliciting and accepting materials for future publication. Just e-mail the info to me at 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

Labor Day Regatta, awards ceremony

Fleet Captain Jim Bolinger has announced that the Labor Day Regatta will be on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 4 and 5 beginning at 11 a.m. each day (with an alternate start at 1 p.m. if the weather dictates).

The final sailors' meeting will be held on Monday, Sept. 6, at 11

a.m. All sailors, family and friends are welcome.

Birthday wishes to two Kings

Calvin King just turned 11 yesterday ... stop by the King's (north shore) and wish him a happy day ...

... and be sure to wish his dad, Bob the parking attendant, a happy 52nd birthday next weekend!



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Have A Safe and Fun Summer!

Birch Lake Notes



Pro Wrestling returns

The picture at left was submitted as either an advertisement for the return of professional wrestling or as this week's "kids of the week" entry.

Don Harman who is younger than you think. Oh, and don't forget to wish Bob King a happy 53rd birthday next weekend.

A final reminder

Next week is the last printed Birch Barker of the year. If you have items to submit, get them to me by Tuesday at noon at sailorphil@philvital.com

More birthday wishes

Belated happy birthday to Jim Beck, who turned 57 last weekend, to Peter Green, who turned the big Four-Oh, and to

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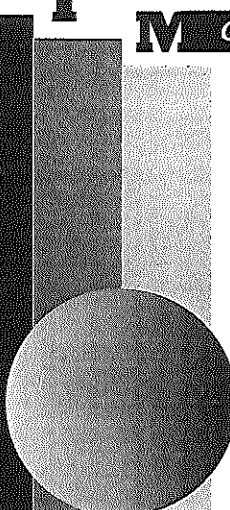
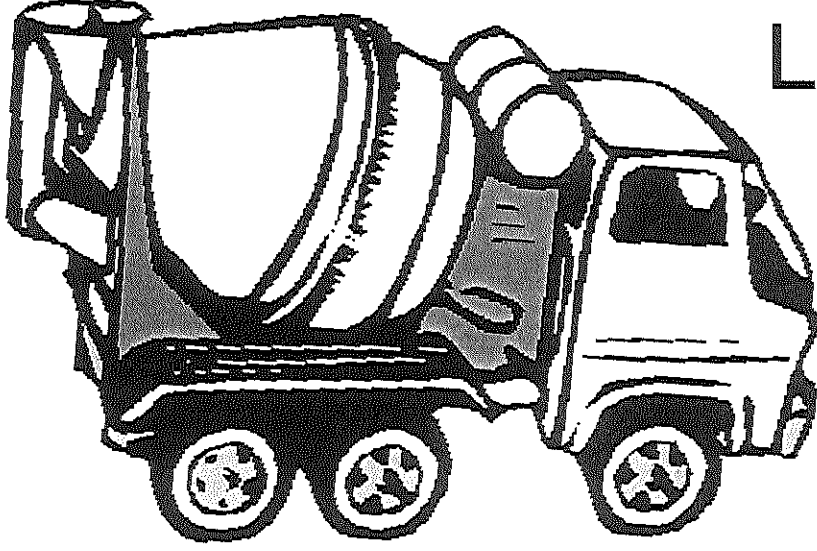


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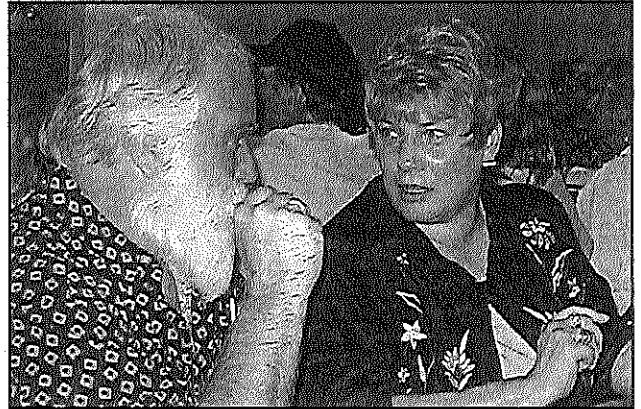
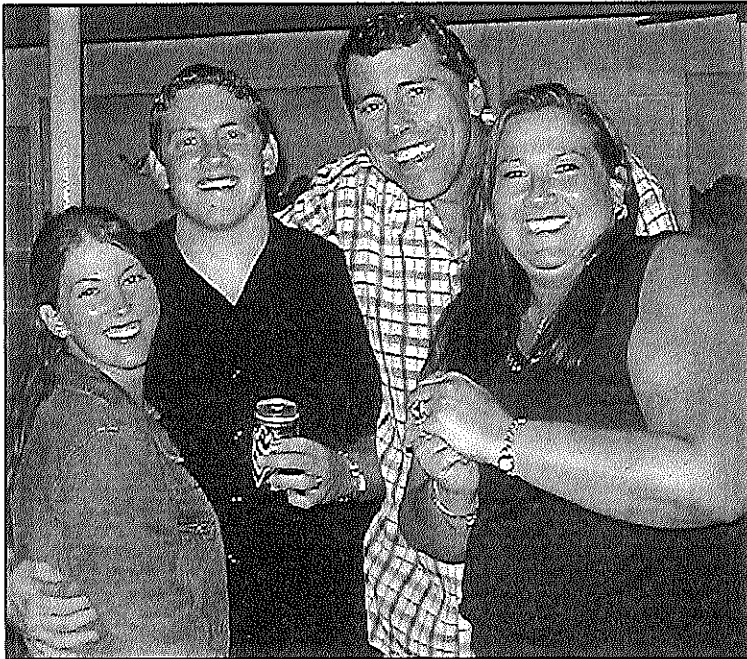
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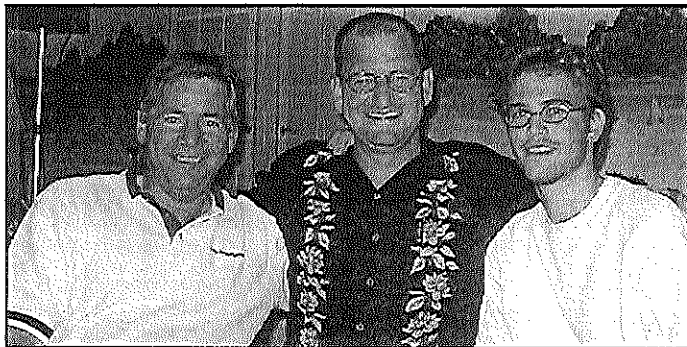


Birch Lake Notes

SCENES FROM A FALL DINNER



photos by Stu Spratt
and Bad Patty Luecht



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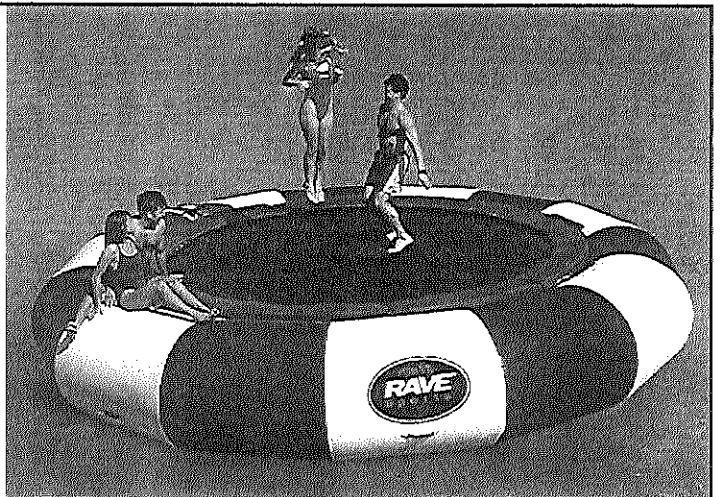
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The 2004 officers of the homeowners Association are Scott Troeger, Jim Bolinger, Don Harman, Bill King and Rick Russwurm. There are dozens of members of the homeowners Association; contact any officer for more information. Homeowners Association meetings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



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Birch Lake Sailing News

My first sailboat race ...

by Nancy Walker

I just have to write about my first sailing race!!

Yesterday was deemed the "best" wind of the sailing season. Of course, I am somewhat protected from the wind here on the west side and really have no clue what I am in for.

Nevertheless, I've promised my son, now off to college, that I would at least try to sail in a race ... good mom that I am, I take off.

I almost immediately discover that I have not got my sail all the way up and that there is WAY more wind than I am prepared to handle. As I am approaching the committee boat, another sailor has me *STANDING* on the front of my boat hefting the sail in the proper posi-

tion. She also gives me a tip ... don't put the rope in the cleat thing or I will definitely be going OVER today.

Now I am in my careful mode, just sure I will be tipping the damn thing over ... and I realize I have my very expensive glasses on with no keeper ... and keep imagining them at the bottom of 100' deep Birch Lake. (The fear of losing my glasses is an entire other story).

My neighbors on the committee boat are laughing by now and asking "YOUUUU are sailing today????".

Well, I keep jockeying around the starting line ... well prepared in strategy!! However, I have no damn idea how to sail this thing.

My neighbor Marty shows up at the very last second and I am scream-

ing to her in near panic now "I thought you were going to help me!"

Now Marty apparently has more than a few competitive bones in her body. She replies, "This is my kind of wind! I can either help you or win."

So, off she goes.

THEY finally take off while I am struggling to MAKE IT GO!

I belatedly get wind in my sail and go, trying my best to watch Marty and do what she is doing when she is doing it.

By now it is certainly gale force wind caused by some remnant of a major hurricane (or maybe it really is a major hurricane). I tack here and there and back again, but make little progress. This goes on long enough that I see Marty fly past the finish line an entire leg in front of all the other boats.

Speaking of the MC'S ... now they start the second race and I am still fumbling about the east side, not even to the first marker of the first race.

Their sails make a LOT of noise, and I am, without question, in their way, regardless of who had the right of way.

I start thinking about horse shows when some idiot would ride in completely out of place on an out of control horse and spoil the chances of those that were there to compete seriously.

So... I decide I will try to sail home. Just about this time I lose my attention to what is going on and over I go!!!

Thankfully, I have lived on water all my life and know how to fall in without going under, and I save my glasses. I grab the dagger board and get all my weight on top of it and tug and tug and push with my feet and tug and tug! It almost comes up, but I just can't pull it over.

Another sailor comes to my rescue and he has trouble pulling it over as the sail was full of water somehow.

Well, that was enough ... I was begging the committee boat for a drink (they had pitchers of something up there), but they were off and I drifted in.

I ended up at the home of Phil and Sandy Vitale, put down my sail and sat on their dock, surveyed the ripped out bottom of my swim suit (no idea how that happened) and watched Marty win three races without a care as to whether I had drowned or not.

Phil and Sandy finally returned home and very sweetly towed me in disgrace back to the west side. We did end up with a victorious Marty, a very pleased Caleb and an exhausted mom.

Guess I'll need more lessons.

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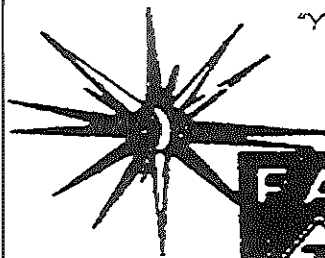
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BLYC Sailing News

Sailors

Finally a Sunday with perfect conditions! A nice wind blew from the SW and made it possible for three contests of sailing skill to take place on a fairly long course. We all extended a welcome to Nancy Walker who came out in the absence of Caleb who has returned to school. It was great to have so many

sailors out. We had nine MCs, eight Sunfish and Bob King joined in with his crew in the EGO for the last race, so it was a nice full field.

I must acknowledge a grievous omission from my sailing report of last week. I neglected to thank Don and Lind Harman, our very best friends for decades, for hosting the kids regatta on

the 14th. Thanks, you guys for your warm hospitality and organizational skills. Thanks also to the Becks and Bruce Wagner for Committee Boating that event and also our races on the 22rd.

Now, here's what happened on Sunday, August 22rd:

-Jim Bolinger, Fleet Captain 2004

Results from last week's sailboat races

Sailor	# Races	class	1st race	2nd race	3rd race	day's total	cumulative	average	place
Scott Troeger	22	MC	1st	1st	5th	4496	34082	1549	1st
Harold Cranmer	25	MC	6th	4th	1st	4194	36316	1453	2nd
Don Harman	25	MC	5th	5th	4th	3961	35842	1434	3rd
Rick Harman	18	MC	8th	3rd	3rd	3977	25537	1419	4th
Phil Vitale	25	MC	3rd	7th	8th	3689	33552	1342	5th
Jim Bolinger	26	MC	4th	6th	9th	3618	34498	1327	6th
Bill Luecht	20	MC	9th	9th	7th	3204	24061	1203	7th
Greg Peyer	4	MC	7th	8th	6th	3500	4735	1184	*
Bruce Harlan	2	MC	DNS	DNS	DNS	2470	2470	1235	*
David Troeger	4	MC	2nd	2nd	2nd	4593	6047	1512	*
Tom Howard	16	Sun A	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	30155	1587	1st
Dave Olson	23	Sun A	1st	3rd	3rd	4488	35205	1531	2nd
Rick Russwurm	15	Sun A	2nd	1st	1st	4781	22549	1503	3rd
Erica Vitale	18	Sun A	3rd	2nd	2nd	4486	26084	1449	4th
Bob King	2	Sun A	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	3220	1610	*
Bob King participated but did not race in his class									
Caleb Walker	21	Sun B	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	32808	1562	1st
Sandy Vitale	21	Sun B	2nd	3rd	2nd	4486	32650	1555	2nd
Steve Richards	18	Sun B	4th	2nd	3rd	4486	32650	1449	3rd
Amy Troeger	10	Sun B	3rd	4th	DNS	2843	14712	1471	**
Chad Plaia	3	Sun B	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	4187	1367	*
Marty Asire	6	Sun B	1st	1st	1st	4830	9425	1571	*
Nancy Walker	0	Sun B	DNF						*

* Has not sailed in the required percentage of races

** Corrections have been made to Amy's score from previous weeks' total

Signed up for Online Barker?

If you've never seen it, you don't know what you're missing! The Online Barker is a monthly e-mail newsletter that I send out to lakers, visitors and friends who want to

keep up with the off-season activities of Birch Lake.

The Online Barker is sent during the months that the printed Birch Barker is not being printed ... starting in

October and running through the first week of May. You can get a sneak preview (or is that a rear-view?) and check out the last one from the spring by visiting the web site www.philvitale.com/barker.

I always keep the most

current month there in case there's a problem with the e-mail system.

If you haven't signed up, subscribe at the web site (you can also unsubscribe anytime you want), or just e-mail me at sailorphil@philvitale.com.

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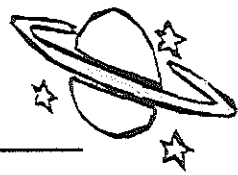
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Stu's Star Stuff



The third-largest planet ...

All nine planets of our solar system were born from the same rotating cloud of gas and dust that surrounded the newborn Sun. Because of that, we might expect all the planets to spin in the same direction, and at the same angle — but they don't. This jumble of motions tells us that the early solar system was chaotic, with frequent collisions between the planets and smaller bodies.

A prime example is Uranus, the third-largest planet.

Most of the other planets rotate more or less in the same direction that they orbit the Sun. In addition, their poles point away from the Sun. But Uranus is different: it lies on its side, so its poles lie nearly in its orbital plane. As a result, its north pole aims at the Sun at the begin-

ning of summer. During southern summer, the south pole gets most of the sunlight. And at the start of spring and fall, the Sun appears above the planet's equator. That creates weather patterns unlike those on any other planet, with winds and clouds changing directions with the seasons.

The most likely explanation for the planet's topsy-turvy rotation is a collision. In the distant past, a planet-sized body must have slammed into Uranus, knocking it on its side, like sometimes happens when two billiard balls collide off-center.

Similar impacts may have affected the other planets, too. An impact between Earth and another body, for example, may have blasted out a geyser of vaporized rock that coalesced to form the Moon.

Uranus is putting in its best

appearance of the year. It rises at sunset, in the constellation Aquarius, and remains in the sky all night. It's also closest to us for the year, so it shines brightest. But you still need binoculars to find it. To look for Uranus follow a line from the spout of the teapot across its top and through the handle. That will take you to Aquarius and it's somewhere in there. A star chart will be helpful.

Also check out Venus and Saturn an hour or two before sunrise. On Tuesday they will be just two degrees apart, about the width of a finger held at arm's length. A great show in one field through your binoculars. And it's free.

-Stu Spratt

The moon for August 28, 2004 (at Midnight): Illuminated Fraction: 0.988; 0.8 days until full moon

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Off the page

by *Marian* (the librarian)

How lucky we are to be living and playing on Birch Lake. I am sitting here looking at the blue water of the lake that mirrors the sky above and I just feel good. We are also lucky to live near to some very good authors as well. While James Whitcomb Riley, Gene Stratton-Porter and Jessamyn West may come to your mind I wanted to highlight a few other jewels among us.

Ø **Jim Blue** Our very own award winning author. His books are available in print as well as in e-book format which has enabled readers from all over the globe to enjoy his books. His first book was Justified Crimes a hard-boiled tale which centers around Ray Fox, a Chicagoan and his girlfriend Carolyn Warneke. They're both unemployed and at an impasse in their lives and in their relationship when Ray gets a business proposition from his "godfather: "Go to Key West. Deliver a briefcase and come back." It's perfectly legal, it pays well, Key West's a nice place, and Ray could use a break from Carolyn, so why not? Why not indeed!

Ø **Kathlyn Gay** Ms. Gay lives in Elkhart, Indiana. She has written a large number of non-fiction books that are

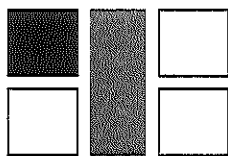
very useful for high school research papers. A recent publication is Body Marks: Tattooing, Piercings, and Scarification. It discusses the history of various forms of body marking, current popularity of body piercing and tattoos, how and why these are done, and some things to think about before choosing to be pierced or tattooed.

Ø **Kurt Vonnegut** Another Indiana author that has been widely popular in the late twentieth century. His well know book Slaughter-House Five is about a fourth-generation German-American who is tortured by his memories of the firebombing of Dresden in 1944 which he witnessed while a prisoner of war.

Ø **Ralph Casperson** He wrote A Northern Boyhood. While he currently lives in Niles, Michigan his book discusses his daily experiences and observations of growing up in Ashland, Wisconsin. It provides information on relatives, friends, and good and bad times.

Ø **Betty Horvath** From Kalamazoo, Michigan. Ms. Horvath wrote the books about a boy named Jasper. The most widely read title was Hooray for Jasper. This picture book tells how Jasper finally found the way to 'get bigger' by rescuing something for a friend.

Next week: *Birch Lakers make suggestions*



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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 Biographies

by Jules Vernon

GWEN HARRIS #E150

Gwen graduated from Mishawaka High School. As a young graduate, she took a bus during WWII from Mishawaka to South Bend where she worked at Bendix making airplane parts for the war effort. Later on, she worked at the First National Bank of Mishawaka until she got married.

Gwen raised 4 children named William, Kim, Scott, and Bev in Elkhart where she lived for 23 years. She has 7 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. After 15 years of service at Midwest Commerce Bank, she retired, and now enjoys working part-time for her son William in Elkhart.

As a young girl, Gwen's family came to

Birch Lake in the 1930's to visit the Shewmans who lived in Woodland Cove. She enjoyed the sandy beach, blue waters, and fishing. In the 1990's, she wanted to live on Birch Lake permanently, so she asked good friend, Marguerite Johnson, to keep her eyes open for a cottage to purchase. In 1996, Gwen purchased #E150 from the Wozniaks. She enjoys the winters

here, and the nice community Birch Lake offers. Gwen is a very nice friend and neighbor.

DARLENE TROYER #E181

Darlene graduated from Washington High School in South Bend, and received a license in Cosmetology from Vogue Beauty School. She worked at Camp

continued on next page



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Friedenswald for 4 years as the Food Service Director. Next, she was hired as the Catering Manager at the Brookdale Club in Elkhart until it closed. She enjoyed being the Planning Coordinator at Union Station Catering, and liked taking a couple's ideas and (sometimes) evolving it into a one night extravaganza! Darlene has always enjoyed cooking for a mass of people!!

For the past 17 years, Darlene has been an EMT for the Newburg Twp.

Ambulance, and served as Secretary. On the side, she has started a jewelry business where she can use her creative talents.

Uncle John and Aunt Levita Scofield lived on Birch Lake, so Darlene's family spent several summers up here visiting. Her parents drove around the lake looking for a place to purchase and found one in 1962 on the east shore. After she and Ken were married in 1972, they purchased the home from her Mom, remodeled, and

raised 2 children named Scott and Kelly. They have 5 grandchildren who enjoy the lake, too.

One of Darlene's favorite memories here at the lake was during the blizzard of 1978. Power was out, and the only heat was from the fireplace. Dan Harvey was going to have to throw away milk from his cows, so anyone with a snowmobile gathered empty milk jugs and took milk to all who were shut-in. Her family mixed the milk and fresh snow to

make" snow ice cream ." They also enjoyed snow pudding and a lot of hot cocoa! Her children still talk about the fun they had during that time.

Just last week, Darlene received the Commodore's Award for her dedication to heading the Ladie's Luncheon since 1995.

Congratulations, Dar!!

Darlene has a great sense of humor and is a good friend whom I admire a lot.



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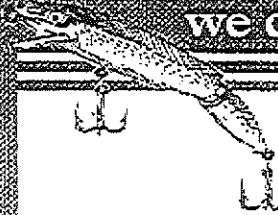
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