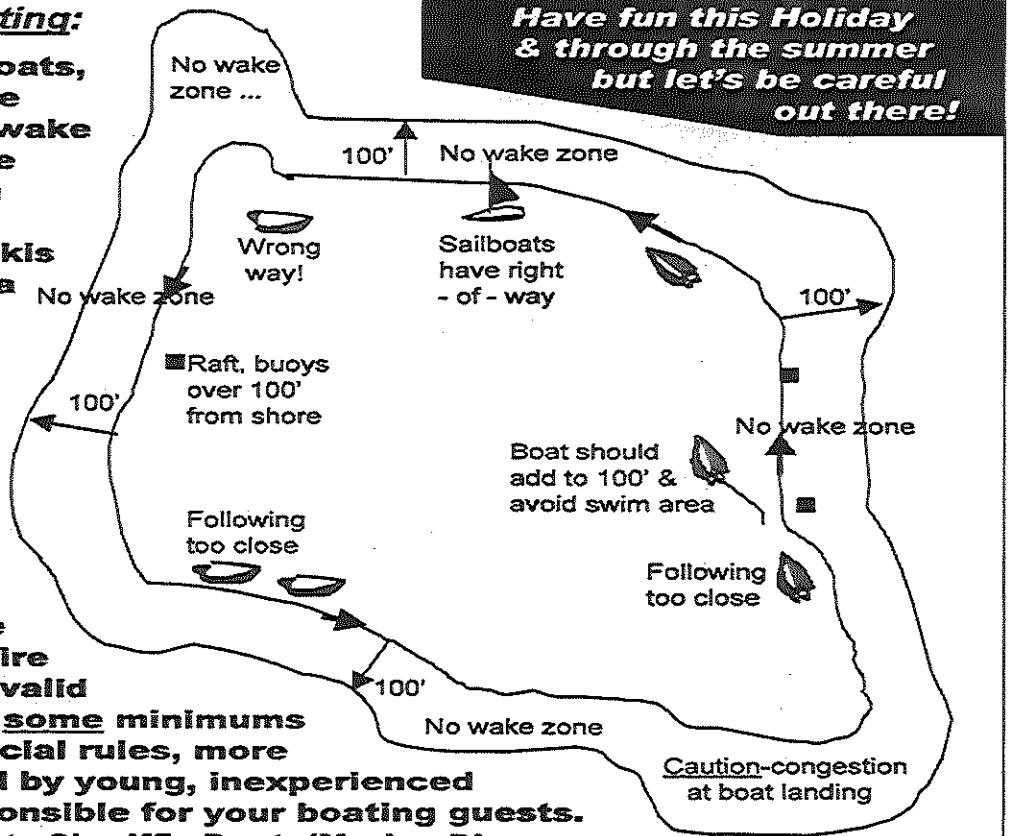


Birch Barker

Weekend of May 28, 2005

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.
- * Consult the Cass County Sheriff's Dept. (Marine Div. for Michigan boating laws



COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

WELCOME BACK... My wife says it is time for everyone to "come home" to the lake.

I want to give a BIG Thanks to those who came out to help with the road clean up this year. Our fearless road clean up supervisor was Dick Bender. There were two of my boys Randy & Ben Osborn, Ryan the vice-commodore & his lovely wife Shana Gableman, and last but not least David Sieggreen.

The Spring Dinner was held at Four Lakes Country Club and was a huge success, (if I have to say so myself.) We planned it a little different this year. So many people leave the lake for the winter and do NOT see each other, so we thought rather than live music, lets just have "listening" music so everyone can visit and catch up on things, and that we did.

I would like to take a minute and thank the people that helped me with the dinner. Tammy Barbour, Jim Bolinger, and my wife Nyla.

At the dinner I told everyone that my wife had made the desert, although this was not entirely accurate, it was very good. I am still convinced that if she made the desert it would have been to-

die-for.

And now for the fun stuff: The Lake! I am sure it will be hopping this weekend and we all need to think SAFETY FIRST!

There will be a Directors meeting next weekend Saturday June 4th at 9 am with a Homeowners Association Meeting directly after. All are welcome to attend both the board and homeowners meetings.

We are also looking for KIDS to deliver the Birch Lake Barker. My wife will be happy to pick the papers up at the printers on Friday afternoon and bring them back to the lake, but she wants some KIDS to help her deliver them Friday nights.

Friday nights? You ask?

Yes, Friday night. That way we can make plans to attend all the fun things at the B.L.Y.C.

The schedule that everyone received with the Spring Dinner announcement is only tentative. We are looking for someone to help plan several KIDS events at the yacht club, for kids who are both younger and teenage. Shana Gableman and my wife Nyla have some ideas and would like some help from other adults ... please contact either of them soon. We want the kids busy this year.

Several of you already know that we (the Erhardt's) are selling our home. We

BLYC Calendar

June 11.....	Commodore's Party
June 25.....	Vice Commodore's Party
July 2.....	Boat Parade & Fireworks
July 3.....	Pancake Breakfast & fireworks rain date
July 4.....	Fireworks Clean-up
July 27.....	Women's Tea
July 29.....	Men's Golf Outing
July 30.....	Garage Sale & Great Tube Float
Aug. 5.....	Ladies Golf Outing
Aug. 20.....	Fall Dinner

are not moving far off the lake, only to our back lot. It is time to get a larger home for my wonderful new family to enjoy. Three boys need a great deal more room, or should I say Momma and I would like a little more privacy.

There are other homes for sale on the lake. We are sad to see those neighbors leave. It would be very helpful if you would drop a note in our mail box if you are a NEW neighbor so that we can get it published and your new friends can stop by to give you a proper Birch Lake welcome (don't be scared most of us generally harmless, right Mr. Bender?

No, seriously drop us a line.

We look forward to everyone's return, until next time...

-John Erhardt, Commodore 2005

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.

Birch Lake Notes

Correction on Harlan's phone
Bruce and JJ Harlan have reported a correction for their South Bend number for the Birch Lake Directory: To reach them there, call: 574-272-2904.

Township Cleanup Day
Porter Township Cleanup Day is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. June 4, at American Waste in Union. Common materials will be accepted free of charge, but a fee will be assessed for tires and any items containing freon.

Craig Cole passes
Craig D. Cole, 65, formerly of Birch Lake, died during October.

Survivors include his wife, Onnaleah; two sons, Timothy of Elkhart and Craig II of Three Rivers; his parents, Verlina and Donald of Kalamazoo; a sister, Cheryl Werner of Kalamazoo; and two brothers, Rodney of Kalamazoo and Terry of Shelbyville, Mich.

Row Boat in the Cove
There is a Montgomery Ward row boat that spent the winter in the cove. It floated up to Tom Rogers' late last fall. It's mustard yellow and has expired decals. I'm sure someone will miss it this spring. Contact Tom Rogers at 476-2383 to claim your boat.

Sunny Waters is Back!

Hello Birch Lakers!!

It's so good to be back with all of our wonderful friends.

B.S. (beloved spouse) is eager to get in the boat and cruise the beautiful waters of Birch Lake with his ever-loving wife (that's me) sipping *non-alcoholic* liquid and dangling my toes in the lake.

BS & I look forward to good times at the Yacht Club, where everyone is friendly and not drunk (well, maybe a little).

Those of you who need some help in a difficult time can call me at my summer home, 1200-4286-91LG. Free help. I am in the Central African Republic.

Love to all,
Sunny

The Birch Barker

This is the first Barker of the summer. It is wholly owned, published and paid for by the Birch Lake Yacht Club and it's board of directors.

Phil Vitale is the unpaid, volunteer editor of the publication. The Barker editor will accept and *consider* for publication, any and all materials submitted, but reserves the right to edit or reject any or all submitted materials. We will not knowingly publish copyrighted materials without appropriate consent.

We will make every effort at accuracy and fairness; if you have a complaint, contact the editor or bring it up at a

BLYC board of directors' meeting.

Deadline for every Barker is the Tuesday before publication. Materials may be placed in the red Barker mail tube at 63174 Birch Road (east side), e-mailed to sailorphil@philvitale.com, or faxed to (269) 445-9200 (please do not fax graphics or photos for publication).

No phone calls, please.

If you want your materials (photos, etc.) returned, please specify and either include a self-addressed, stamped envelope, or make arrangements to pick up your items in person.

All times listed in the Barker are Indiana time unless otherwise specified.



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Have A Safe and Fun Summer!

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's blooming dogwood!

submitted by Bob King

America's woodlands soon will be carpeted with delicate bunchberry dogwood flowers — or maybe not so delicate.

A team of scientists has reported that the blossoms explode open in less than 0.5 milliseconds and with 800 times the acceleration experienced by astronauts — the fastest plant movement on record, making the snap of a Venus fly trap appear glacial by comparison.

Joan Edwards, professor of biology at Williams College in Massachusetts, and colleagues began their investigation into "Cornus canadensis" exploding flowers after a botanical excursion.

A student, Sarah Kliensky, stuck her nose near a bunch of flowers.

"Oh, something went poof!" Edwards recalled her

saying. "I'd never known anything that poofed out of those flowers," said Edwards, whose study was published in the current issue of the journal Nature.

Edwards transported hundreds of still-closed flowers back to her lab, prudently avoiding the word "explosive" when explaining her cargo to airport security.

Attempts to film the flowers with a 1,000-frames-per-second camera produced only blurred images because the motions were too fast. Clear images finally were obtained with a 10,000-frames-per-second camera.

The four-petaled flower bursts open when a large pollinating insect lands on a trigger hair. When the petals unfurl, the pollen-bearing filaments inside spring straight, much like a medieval catapult.



A blooming dogwood ...

The motion sprays pollen over the insect or into the air to be caught by the wind,

thus helping to pollinate new flowers.

http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2002274890_plant14.html

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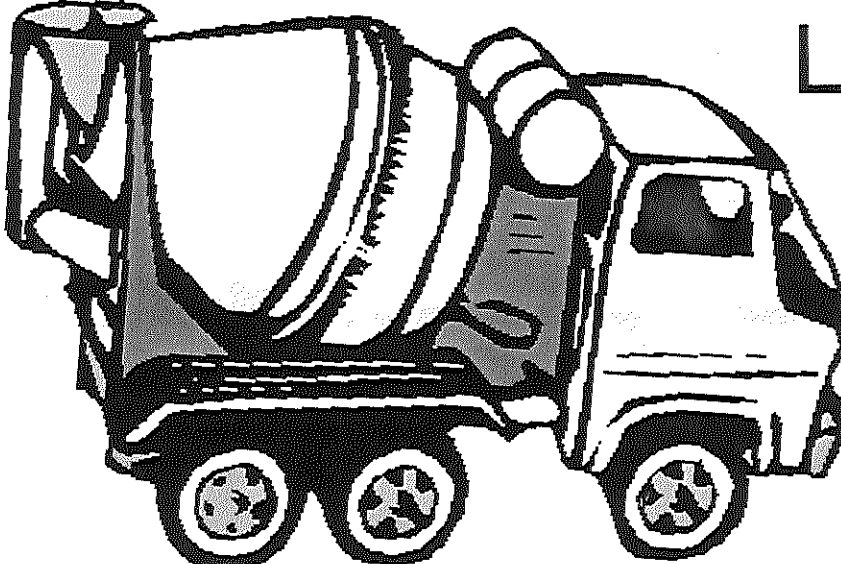
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Birch Lake Notes

Birch Kid organizes awareness campaign

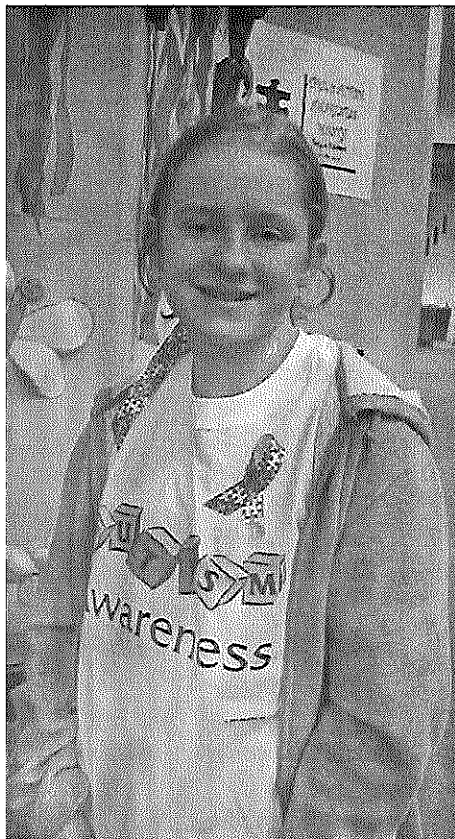
Katie Luecht, the daughter of Patty and Bill Luecht of Indianapolis and Birch Lake (east side) says she didn't think the teasing she heard one day about some special-needs students was appropriate, so she decided to do something about it.

With a younger brother who has autism, Luecht, a fifth-grader at Danville South Elementary School, has knowledge of the condition that her peers may not share. So she thought selling the multi-colored puzzle piece ribbon of autism awareness would be a beginning to her classmates' educations.

With the help of her family, the student council and her Girl Scout troop Luecht purchased the materials to make ribbon pins to be handed out with a card briefly explaining what autism is and what the ribbon represents.

Along with the ribbons and cards, Luecht's selling table and the halls in her school have posters about autism.

According to information from the Autism Society of America, autism is a complex developmental disability that affects an individual in the areas of social interaction and communication. The society said it is a spectrum disorder that affects each individual differently and to varying degrees of severity. And as many as 1.5 million children and adults in



America are thought to have autism today.

The puzzle pattern of the ribbon represents the complexity of autism and the different colors and shapes are meant to show the diversity of the disorder and the

Birch Barker Kid of the Week Katie Luecht

people affected.

"We see a lot of the kids coming up and reading the posters," said Amy Linsmeyer, the school's life skills teacher. "So they're interested, so that's the best part."

And they seem to like the ribbons as well. At 50 cents a ribbon, the first day of sales brought in \$47.

Tina Carlton, school principal, said, "This is outstanding. She can't even keep up with the supply and demand. This is self-directed, composed by Katie."

Luecht has decided that all of the proceeds will go to Linsmeyer's special education class, where her fourth-grade brother John attends. Linsmeyer said the money will be used to buy more materials for the class.

With each ribbon a person buys, they get a paper puzzle piece they are to color. Those pieces will be cut out and put on the walls through the school.

Luecht says so far she has seen a slight improvement, and hasn't seen anyone being teased.

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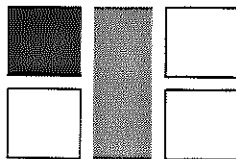
WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE

Dan Reynolds, chairman476-8877
Terry Dugan476-2814
Rick Russwurm.....476-2407

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The 2005 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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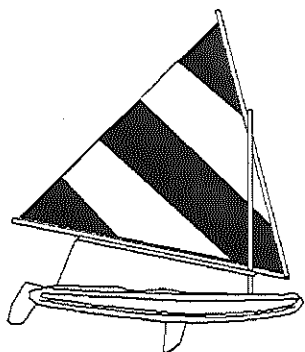
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We wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer at Birch Lake!

-Ben and Vanessa Wozniak

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BLYC Sailing News



Sailors

Sail Ho! Old sailors, new sailors, landlubbers let's meet at the yacht club on Sunday, May 29 at 11 am to go over sailing rules, answer questions and find race starters.

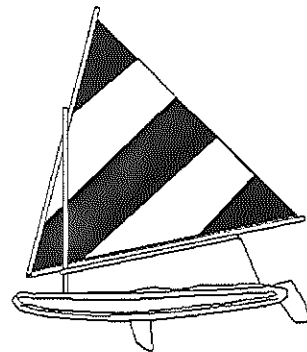
Then, weather permitting, at 2 pm on Sunday let's get on the water and

sail 2 races.

Then, if there is enough interest, we can sail 3 more on Monday, May 30 starting at 11 am.

If we have 5 boats in a fleet, we'll have had a Memorial Day Regatta.

-Dave Olson, Fleet Captain
2005



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For Sale — Two-person Sea-Ryder Pedal Boat with sun canopy, flag holder and flag staff and cover. \$350 or best offer. Call Bruce Wagner, 476-2090.

For Sale — Cedar pier sections; approximately 48 foot with approximately 10x10 platform — plus hardware and a ladder. \$500. 476-9658 or (219) 464-4268.

For Sale — Jr. Golf Clubs (putter, 3 irons, driver) with backpack-

style carrying case. Ideal for 9-12 yr old. Excellent condition. Call 262-796-0189.

WANTED:

Kids' sandbox (ground level or stand-up box), toddler bike or trike (or age appropriate riding toys for a 2-year old), croquet set. Please contact Beth Olson at jef-fandbeth1@sbcglobal.net or 317.259.7540.

WANTED TO RENT

Wanting to rent lake place with 3 bedrooms or more for the Week

of July 24 (or days around week-end of July 30th). Please contact Diana Henderson-Wozny at dwozny@crowchizek.com or 574-272-7896

WANTED

Barker Advertisers. Would you like to see your ad in the Birch Barker? Advertising is being accepted now for publication for the remainder of 2005. For more information or to buy and ad, contact Dick Bender at 476-2591.

GOT A CLASSIFIED?

Birch Barker classified ads are published free for members of the Birch Lake Yacht Club; non-members must pay \$5 per listing.

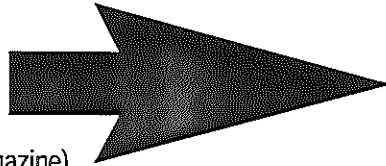
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or e-mail it to me at: sailorphil@philvitale.com

Birch Lake Yacht Club Contributions

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- \$_____ - BLYC Associate Member Dues (\$10 / year)
- \$_____ - Homeowners Assoc. (\$10 / year)
- \$_____ - Sailing Fees (\$15 / year)
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- \$_____ - Fireworks Fund
- \$_____ - Water Quality Program
- \$_____ - Riparian (\$7/yr, provide address for magazine)
- \$_____ - Other _____
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Mail to:
Holly Troeger, Treasurer
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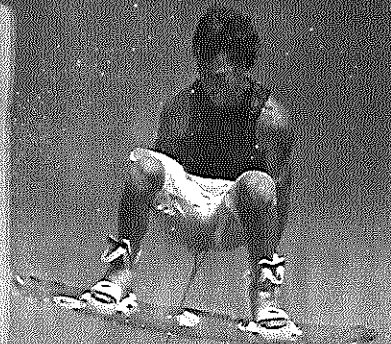
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Swimmer's itch/What it is, does and how to prevent (and treat) the seasonal itch

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 it's 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: Although we haven't heard of any cases of swimmers' itch yet this year, it is inevitable. 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

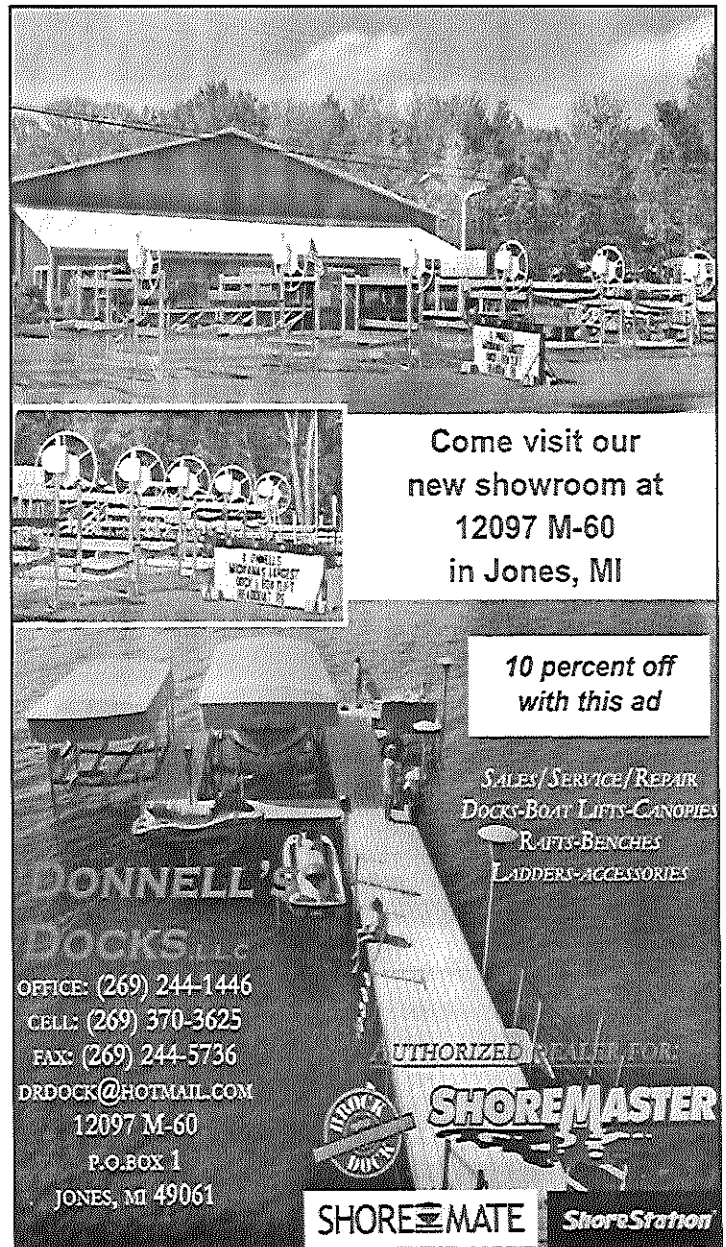
BLYC HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION NEWS

Porter Township Zoning Board. John Groszek has recently been appointed to the Porter Township Zoning Board. John joins fellow Birch Lake resident Bob Morrison on that Board.

Sewer Board. Two Birch Lake residents, Carl Klappauf and Herm Kruggel, have been appointed to the Sewer Board for the Porter Township Wastewater Collection and Treatment System.

Sewer Construction Status. For any who may not have read Bob King's article in the online Birch Barker which was emailed on April 21, 2005, here is a brief summary of the status of the sewer project based on information provided by Tom Duneau of Wightman Petrie. More information is available at the Wightman Petrie web site www.wightman-assoc.com and at Porter Township's web site www.portertownship.org. In addition, sewer contractors will be available to answer questions at a public meeting at the Porter Township Hall Saturday, June 4, at 9 a.m. (Michigan time).

- The sewer force main has been installed to Birch Lake.
 - Lift stations are currently being installed around the lake.
 - Installation of the gravity sewer lines around the lake is scheduled to begin in late Fall 2005. The installation of the gravity lines won't be completed until Spring 2006.
 - Sewer hook ups will begin in Spring 2006 when the gravity lines have been installed.
- The above schedule is tentative, as there are many variables that could change it. Although sewer hook up will not begin until Spring of 2006, beware of contractors claiming to be approved by the Township or Sewer Board. The Township and the Sewer Board have not and will not approve any particular contractor. Contractors hired to perform sewer hook ups should be licensed and bonded.



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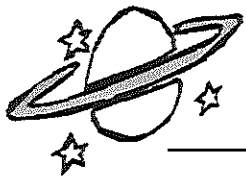
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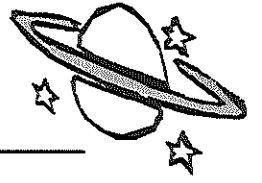
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Seven sisters' rattles

To many ancient North American cultures, the rattlesnake was a powerful symbol of life and death: death, because its bite can be fatal, and life, because it periodically "renews" itself by shedding its skin. People tried to capture this power by using the skins or rattles in special ceremonies. And they honored the snake by placing it in the stars.

One example is the Pleiades star cluster. It stands high in the east around 9 or 10 p.m. The Pleiades looks like a tiny dipper of six moderately bright stars; in fact, it's often mistaken for the Little Dipper. It's actually easier to find by looking out of the corner of your eye, because it looks like a bright little "cloud" of light.

The Pleiades was especially important to the cultures of southern Mexico and Central America, because

its annual journey across the sky coincided with the growing season. Every 52 years, the Aztecs held a special ceremony in mid-November to celebrate its passage overhead at midnight — an event that marked a time of renewal for both heaven and Earth.

The Maya of the Yucatan revered the Pleiades as well. To them, the little star cluster represented the rattles of a rattlesnake. Mayan priests carried short sticks with rattles attached to them, and some Mayan art shows a god carrying a staff shaped like a rattler. The Pleiades may even have played a role in Mayan calendar cycles.

Earlier, we said that SIX stars outline the group's dipper shape, not seven. It's hard to say, then, why Greek mythology has the cluster as the SEVEN Sisters. Six members of the cluster clearly stand out. If you begin to look at fainter stars, several

more pop into view -- not just one. So it's hard to envision the Pleiades as exactly SEVEN sisters.

One story says the seventh sister married a mortal, and her luster was dimmed as a result. But some have suggested that perhaps one of the stars appeared much brighter when the Pleiades were named.

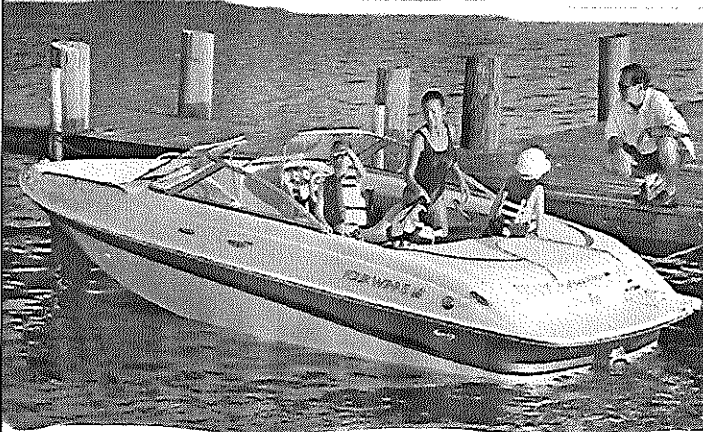
Look for the rattles or the sisters high in the east in mid-evening, and passing overhead after midnight. Or just check out the back of a Subaru. Their logo is a representation of the Pleiades.

Either way enjoy the show. It's free.

-Stu Spratt

The moon for May 28, 2005 (at Midnight): Illuminated Fraction: 0.630; 1.2 days before last quarter

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Women's Coffee planned June 16

A Ladies' Coffee will be held at the BLYC at 10 am on June 16. More details will be announced soon.

Camp Tannadoonah's new Web Site

Camp T has a new website — and everyone should make a bookmark so that they can keep updated on all things Tannadoonah including workdays and such.

www.campfireusarbc.org



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