

Birch Lake Banker

Weekend of June 18 2005



cloudy day sailin'

or rather, driftin'

photo by Bob King

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Let me start by saying we had a great time at the Commodore's Party last Saturday night. Many people were missed. I will mention a few that come to mind: Bill & Le King, (Bill's hip popped out of the socket on June 5th, and he is recovering at home). I guess I can't mention everyone that was not there, but you know you were missed.

We did have a few new friends make it to the party. Linda Yoshizawa, Richard & Judy Lindzy, and Paul & Celia Falen along with their son. (I hope I spelled that right). It was nice to see everyone and visit all night long. There were plenty of wonderful munchies to go around.

Also a huge THANK YOU to the professional parking attendant, Bob King. He was quite a striking figure in his bright orange vest. No one ran over his foot, and he made a little cash by doing a little valet parking! The professional bartending staff that always comes to the rescue, Patti Russwurm, Sandy & Phil Vitale, their daughter Erica, and her great man Steve Richards. Sandy went home to relieve Patty & Bill Luecht from parenting, so they could join the party. Now I must say that is TRUE friendship!

Thanks to Phil Dudeck for the quick once over with the lawn mower to clear the parking area Saturday afternoon. (you got caught by Nyla!) Thanks again friend. Terry & Becky Wiseman took Jim & Deb Bolinger and Nyla & me for a very nice boat ride after the party. The lake is sure quiet at night.

Please plan to attend the Vice-Commodore party on June 25th at 6pm I.S.T. It will be a grand time. Ryan and Shanna are having a Caribbean theme. Again, please bring munchies to share with all our friends. Everything else will be provided. We look forward to seeing

everyone on the 25th. We expect those of you that were not there on the 11th to show up! hint hint.

Friday Nyla and I were childless (they went to their dad's home, and our good friend Artie stopped by and picked us up for a boat ride. I now have to get Nyla a pontoon boat to motor around on the lake. She likes the "High" (slow) rate of speed you can go. She has no need for speed on the lake. We then went to pick up Mike Lutz. After a nice slow run around the lake we decided to combine some groceries and have dinner at Mike's. By the time we got our groceries together and over to Mike's his beautiful girlfriend Tammy and her friend Sara were there to join us. Let me tell you how he can cook a mean steak on the grill in the dark. Give him a call. I'm sure he can give us all a few pointers. Artie then took them for a ride around the lake and Nyla and I headed for home, only to stop at Dave & Deanna's home (Mr. Bender's rental)...you see Deanna is my adopted niece. Her Uncle and I are BEST friends from school. It was a fun time.

Saturday was a different start of the day. Nyla and I went up to the Yacht Club to ready for the party and looked at the time, and I had to run to the boys' baseball games, Nyla said she would finish the prep work. I think she really wanted to sneak a nap in there too. I got her though! I had her girlfriend Jane call her and shame her into going to the ball games. Oops, she got there and the Rain

Birch Lake Friends ...

We knew the Commodore's Party would be a big success and hated to miss it! We thank all of you who took the time to send good thoughts and wishes on the fancy stationery. Hope to see everyone at the next get-together.

-Bill & Le King

BLYC Calendar

June 14.....	Ladies' Coffee/Get Together
June 25.....	Vice Commodore's Party
July 2.....	Boat Parade & Fireworks
July 3.....	Pancake Breakfast & fireworks rain date
July 4.....	Fireworks Clean-up
July 29.....	Men's Golf Outing
July 30.....	Garage Sale & Great Tube Float
Aug. 5.....	Ladies Golf Outing
Aug 6.....	Corn & Sausage Roast
Aug. 20.....	Fall Dinner

hit. Big drops, lots of Big Drops. We looked like drowned rats! We survived. Home to shower and up to the party we went.

Sunday was spent resting, after we cleaned up the yacht club a bit to get ready for the line dancing lessons on Monday morning.

We are still having trouble with SPEEDERS. The safety committee will be contacting the Cass County Sheriff's Department to see what our options are to slow people down. Also we drove around the lake Sunday evening and several people had garbage out of containers or the containers so full the tops would not close. When the animals get into the garbage it is left up to us to clean it up. Please think about what you leave and how you leave it, when you go home to town for the week.

The Corn and Sausage roast is going to be August 6th at the Yacht Club. Come one, come all. My man Bernie (and his wonderful wife Blair) said he would be the Grill Master again. Please, if he gives you a call for help, DON'T turn him down.

Okay I will let you all get out and enjoy the lake. Just remember to be safe. Splish Splashin' Away!

-John Erhardt, Commodore 2005

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

Newberg Township Fire & EMS

Emergency fire and ambulance services provided to Birch Lake are through the Newberg Township Fire Department in Jones, Michigan. This fire department has always served the lake area. At one time the Newberg Fire Department was owned jointly by Newberg and Porter townships and was known as Newberg-Porter EMS. That changed six years ago when the Porter Township Board insisted on a separation from Newberg Township and requested a buyout of all fire and ambulance equipment and buildings. A 20-year contract was agreed upon between the two township boards. The fire department was then named Newberg Fire and EMS and has continued to service Birch Lake and the surrounding area.

Currently Mike Holdeman fire chief of the Porter Township Emergency Services is initiating the breaking of this 20-year service contract to our area. Porter Township Board members voted last summer to give their emergency services department an operational budget and the authorization to govern their own affairs through the Southeast Public Safety Authority (SEPSA). SEPSA is a Municipal Corporation, and the governing authority as well as owner of Porter Emergency Services.

Newberg Township EMS has provided many Birch Lake residents with emergency ambulance and fire assistance over the years, including a manned crew for our 4th of July fireworks display and hopes to continue this

service for years to come. We are fortunate to have this EMS department in close proximity to the lake providing faster response times.

-Darlene Troyer
East Side Homeowner and an EMT and
Officer for Newberg EMS services

2005 BLYC Boat Parade

Start your creative juices flowing!! The annual Birch Lake Boat Parade will be held Sunday, July 3 — registration is at Dick Bender's pier at 2:30 (south side) and the parade starts at 3pm. Patriotism, Hollywood movies and song titles are some ideas to get you thinking. We are hoping for a record number of participants this year!! The judges will be Charlene Sheets, Katha Machalleck, and Judy Olson —they are all bribable! Contact Judy at 476-2125 if you have any questions.

Line Dancing

The first session of Monday morning line dancing with Lind Harman was a great success—and a good workout. The same dances will be repeated for a few weeks so that all can learn them. 10:30 at the Yacht Club on Monday mornings is the place to be—everyone is invited.

Auction for schools

David and Margaret Bouwkamp are hosting a fund raiser for Constantine School Athletics. The event is the first annual Falcon Athletic Booster Dinner/Auction. It will be

on Friday, July 1. Dinner and Silent Auction are from 6 - 7pm with a live auction following. The event will be at the Constantine American Legion; all are welcome. Tickets are \$5 and will be exchanged at the door for food tickets or can be used towards an auction item.

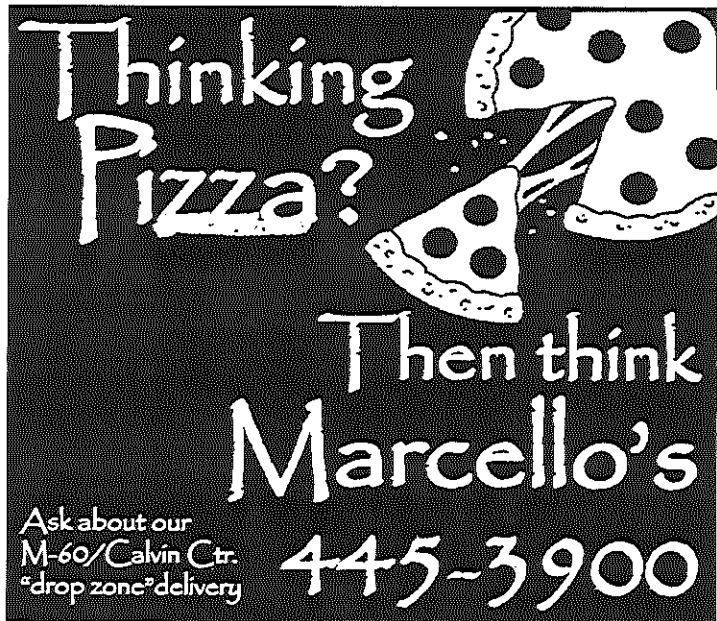
In addition you can help by donating items for the auction. They are looking for antiques, tools, yard furniture, gift certificates, services, art, photography or just about anything you think someone would like to bid on. You will receive a receipt for tax deductions and the kids will thank you for your help. You can call David or Margaret for pick-up of items at 476-1001 or 816-1000 (cell).

Raccoon Repellent

We had a raccoon take up residence under our front porch and unfortunately, he got in at a place where we couldn't block his entrance. We tried ammonia and moth balls but they only stunk up the place. Ken Troyer suggested calling Animal Control to get a live box to trap him. He also said that they don't like noise.

After thinking about the noise suggestion, I put a small radio with the speaker on the floor and turned it on at night. After a few days, the animal noises and smells are gone. I still turn on the radio every so often at night and turn it off in the morning and he has not returned. It was a painless, easy way to discourage an unwanted boarder. Thanks, Ken.

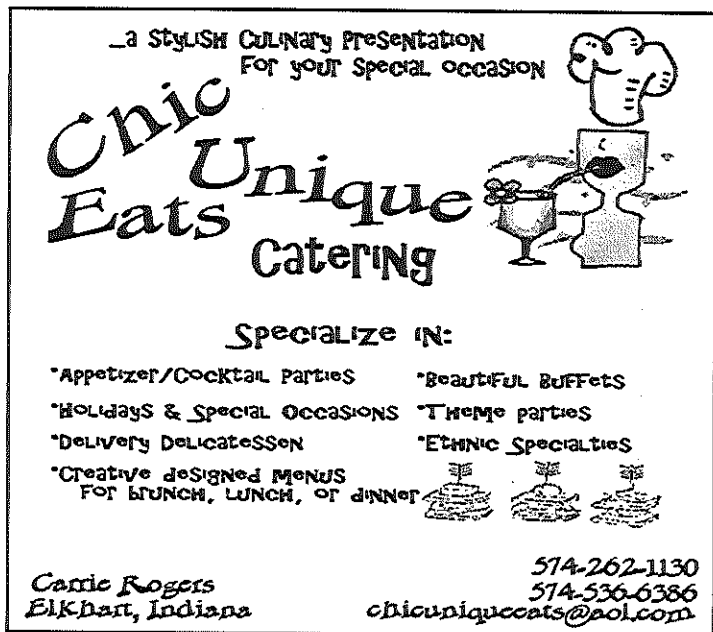
-Judy Olson



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Birch Lake Notes

Birch Lake stuff for sale

Sun Visors, foam with coil back in royal blue - \$4; Canvas Totes, navy blue in color imprinted in white - \$12; Bib Aprons - \$15; Fleece Blankets, navy blue with a sailboat in color circled by a gold rope and birch lake text, all embroidered in the lower right corner - \$30 To buy or order call: Denny Weesner 476-2569; Maryann O'Neil 476-2831; Judy Olson 476-2125; Linda Bergan 476-9359; Vickie Rogers 476-2383.

From the Safety Committee:

PWC's have additional specific boating rules. PWC operators must adhere to legal requirements that apply specifically to the operation of personal watercraft on Michigan waters. Requirements specific to PWCs

- It is illegal to operate a PWC between one hour before sunset and 8:00 AM.
- A PWC must be operated at slow-no wake speed if crossing within 150 feet behind another vessel, unless the other vessel is also a PWC.
- PWCs must be operated in a reasonable manner at all times. It is illegal to:
 - Jump the wake of another vessel unnecessarily close to the other vessel
 - Weave a PWC through congested traffic
 - Swerve at the last possible moment to avoid collision.
- You may not allow a child under 7 to ride on or be towed behind a PWC unless with a parent, guardian or designee.
- The lanyard of a PWC's ignition safety switch must be attached to the person, cloth-

ing, or PFD of the operator.

■ Each person riding on or towed behind a PWC must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type I, II, or III PFD. Inflatable PFDs may not be used.

■ It is illegal to harass wildlife or disturb aquatic vegetation with your PWC. Sharing Your PWC-Safely!

Be sure your guests understand how to safely operate your PWC, fall within the Michigan guidelines for operation and follow the Michigan laws.

Your Birch Lake Safety Committee:

**DAVID BOUWKAMP, DAN COVEY
MIKE LUTZ, HOWARD BLACKWOOD**

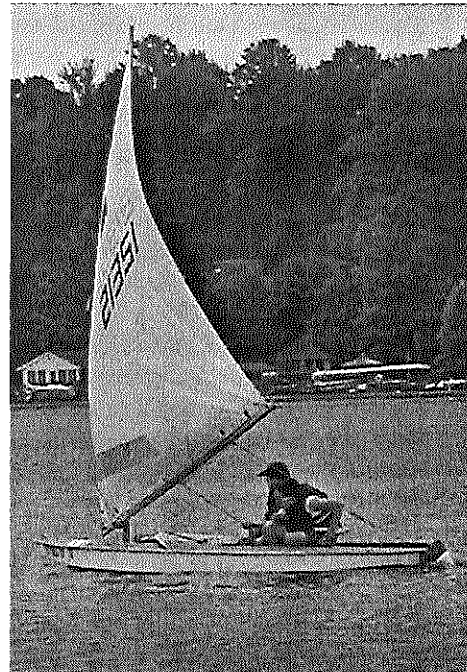
Porter Twp Sewer Board

The Porter Township Sewer Board would like residents to know they are available to help. If you have questions or concerns, call a member or attend one of two monthly meetings (Monday nights at 7 pm (MI) at the town hall. Members of the committee are Steve Holtz, Long Lake, 641-7008; Carl Klappauf, Birch Lake, 476-2663; Herm Kruggel, Birch Lake, 476-2169; and Pam Bryant, Shavehead Lake, 641-2001 (note: Vicki Hall, Union, resigned from the committee). Area residents can also keep up on the sewer installation by visiting the Web site for the project at: www.wightman-assoc.com/porter/porter.html

Barker delivery people needed

The BLYC needs people to deliver the Barker on Friday evenings. Contact John or Nyla Erhardt at 591-1627 or 744-7082.

Barker Kids of the week Calvin King & Neil Troeger



Captain Jack Sparrow's go nothing on Cal & Neil, who competed in their first BLYC race last weekend. It was great to see them out there ... sorry the weather wasn't better, but you guys did great! Hope to see you out again soon!

photo by proud papa Bob

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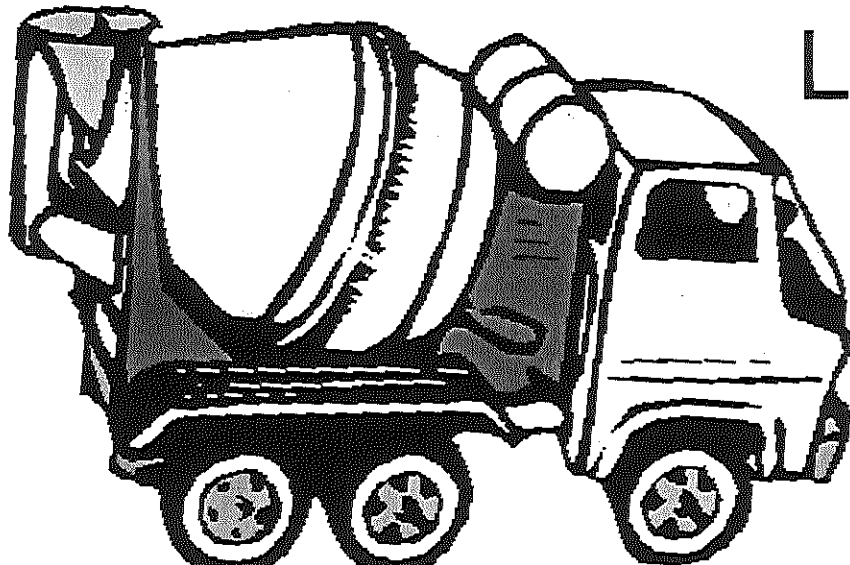
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Birch Lake Notes

Why should you pay your dues?

Every year the Birch Lake Yacht Club's Board of Directors and the Commodore send out gentle reminders to property owners around the lake asking for a voluntary \$20/household donation in the form of annual "dues."

And every year, only about half of us pay our dues.

Those who don't pay have a variety of excuses that range from "We don't go to the parties" to "The Yacht Club doesn't do anything for me ..."

Well ... HORSE HOCKEY!

The BLYC and its committees are responsible for activities that are part of all of our lives, whether we know it or not. Just a few of the *regular* functions of these groups include:

- Monthly lake water-quality testing
- The ongoing fight against invasive species like purple loosestrife, zebra mussels and Eurasian watermilfoil
- The annual road clean-up
- The Birch Barker* (both the summer and online, winter edition)
- Summer activities for kids and the annual KidGatta
- Fourth of July activities including fireworks, the boat parade and the pancake breakfast
- The annual lake-wide garage sale
- The ladies tea/coffee
- The annual mens' and womens' golf tournaments
- The corn & sausage roast
- The spring and fall dinners
- The safety booklet (produced and distributed to all rental properties)
- Road and landing speed-limit and safety signs
- Maintenance of the Yacht Club building and grounds

ALL OF THESE COMMITTEES, FUNCTIONS AND ENTITIES EXIST BECAUSE OF THE BIRCH LAKE YACHT CLUB — AND ARE FULLY FUNDED BY THE BIRCH LAKE YACHT CLUB.

In the box on this page are a list of

BLYC 'NON-PARTY' EXPENSES JUNE, 2004-May, 2005

General expenses

Midwest Energy - June, 2004-May, 2005.....	\$376.48
Michiana Recycling - trash service 2004 season.....	\$225.00
Cleaning/supplies BLYC upkeep.....	\$247.60
Opening/closing BLYC/antifreeze.....	\$115.45
Gibson Insurance.....	\$967.00
4th of July - boat parade trophies.....	\$125.61
4th of July - 2004 fireworks.....	\$5,000.00
Garage sale - advertising and costs.....	\$41.49
KidGatta expenses.....	\$130.49
State of Michigan - yearly not-for-profit filing fee.....	\$20.00
Commodore year-end trophy/plaques/flag.....	\$96.83
New sailing markers - note: sail fees cover sail season trophies.....	\$154.45
On-Line Barker winter 2004/2005.....	\$120.00

Water Quality

CLMP monitoring program enrollment fee.....	\$122.00
Michigan Lakes & Streams Assn. annual dues.....	\$165.00
MLSA fall regional conference seminar.....	\$40.00
MLSA state conference registration.....	\$130.00
MLSA state conference - expenses.....	\$402.53
Water Quality testing equip/reporting/mailling supplies.....	\$360.48

Porter Township

Summer real estate tax.....	\$109.82
Fall real estate tax.....	\$683.75
Sewer initial payment.....	\$340.00

Total.....\$9,973.98

the "non-party" related expenses that our dues help to pay ... but if you do the math, you'll see dues alone aren't enough to cover even the basic expenses.

There are approximately 235 homes on Birch Lake, about half of which traditionally pay dues of \$20/house ... which brings in only \$2,350. Fund raising events (sale of Birch Lake merchandise) the sale of advertising in the Birch Barker (thanks Dick) and voluntary donations from generous neighbors who recognize the value of maintaining the Birch Lake Yacht Club.

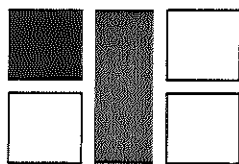
The officers and members of the Birch Lake Yacht Club Board of Directors

thank everyone who pays their dues and urges those of you who haven't to consider all of the ways your yacht club dues payment could be used to help us all.

PLEASE PAY YOUR DUES!

A note on parties and the Barker*

Birch Lake Yacht Club parties and the Birch Barker are "underwritten" by the BLYC, but in most cases sufficient donations given at the parties and the revenues from advertising sales are returned to the club to cover the costs.



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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

Little to no wind hampers sailors in week 2

The first race last Sunday was doable — at least everybody kept moving.

If Don Harman hadn't "flown" around the course during race 2, we would have scuttled it.

Thanks to Deb Bolinger, Lind Harman and Judy Olson for starting the



races. Tom Howard says he'll coach any sailor, including novices, during the races. See you tomorrow on the lake, we'll start at 11 am Indiana time.

-Dave Olson, Fleet Captain

Standings after week 2:

Name	1st Race	2nd Race	Season Average
MC Class			
Scott Troeger	DNS	DNS	1610
Don Harman	3	1	1542
Harold Cranmer	2	3	1525
Rick Harman	4	DNF	1524
Jim Bolinger	1	6	1422
Caleb Walker	7	4	1328
Phil Vitale	5	5	1318
Bill Luecht	6	2	1307
Rick Russwurm	8	7	1142

Sunfish "A"			
Dave Olson	1	1	1618
Tom Howard	STT	STT	1604
Sandy Vitale	2	2	1525

Sunfish "B"			
Cal King &			
Neil Troeger	1	DNF	1610
Steve Richards	DNS	DNS	1604
Nancy Walker	DNF	DNF	1581

*STT - Stopped to Teach

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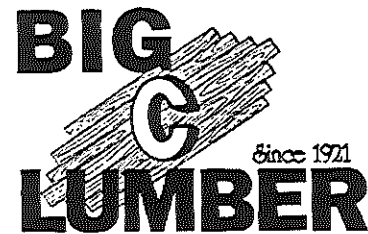
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For Rent: Cottage on beautiful north side. Three bedrooms, sleeps 6. Indoor plumbing. \$750 per week. Discounts available. Contact Stewart Spratt at 269.476.2113 or 574.291.3227.

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. 262-796-0189.

For Sale — 1992 Yamaha Waverunner - Good condition - includes 2 place trailer \$ 1,000 Ball # 104, 476-9775

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.

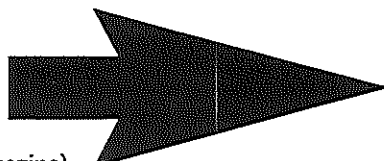
WANTED TO RENT
Want to rent lake place with 3 bedrooms or more for the week of July 24 (or days around week-end of July 30th). Cal Diana Henderson-Wozny at dwozny@crowechizek.com or 574-272-7896

LOST & FOUND
Lost: Wheel mounted to a short axle used on a shore station. Floated away this spring. Cottage 00, east lot next to the creek. Call Paul Rzeszewski 574-288-7936 or cell574-340-3542

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.
To submit an ad, put it in the Barker Box at 63174 Birch Road (east side), or e-mail it to me at: sailorphil@philvitale.com

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)
- \$ ___ - Safety Committee
- \$ ___ - Other (non-party related expenses)



Mail to:
Holly Troeger, Treasurer
1516 Ash Drive East
Elkhart, IN 46514

Drop off at:
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2005 BLYC Officers and Board of Directors

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 Secretary - Sandy Vitale.....476-1680
 Treasurer - Holly Troeger.....476-9898
 Fleet Captain - Dave Olson.....476-2125
 Past Comm - Stewart Spratt.....476-2133

Judy Olson.....476-2125
 Maryann O'Neill.....476-2831
 Vicki Rogers.....476-2383
 Paula Russell.....476-1880
 Rick Russwurm.....476-2407
 Charlene Sheetz.....476-2604
 Denise Smitley.....476-9000
 Holly Troeger.....476-9898
 Scott Troeger.....476-9898
 Phil & Sandy Vitale.....476-1680
 Bruce Wagner.....476-2090
 Denny Weesner.....476-2569

Rick Russwurm.....476-2407
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 Bob Temple.....476-2773
 Phil Vitale.....476-1680
 Sandy Vitale.....476-1680

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 Harold Cranmer.....476-2170
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 Jack Miller.....476-9226


WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE

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

HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

The 2005 officers of the homeowners Association are Scott Troeger, Jim Bolinger, Don Harman, Bill King and Rick Russwurm.

There are quite a few 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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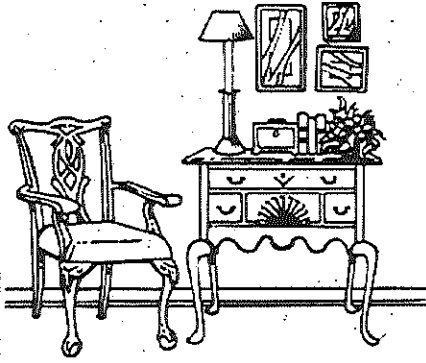
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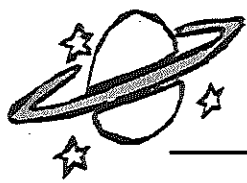
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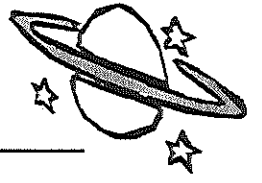
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Stu's Star Stuff



Planets & the analemma

If you haven't noticed the evening planets Venus, Saturn, and Mercury in a while, catch them at your first opportunity.

They span merely 10 degrees (a fist width), sitting low in the west-northwest during dusk. Mercury, the lowest of the three, sets about 1 1/2 hours after sunset, so don't wait too late to observe.

The planets will pull closer all week long, eventually forming what is known to skywatchers as a trio. A trio occurs when three planets can appear in a field just 5 degrees wide.

By next Saturday all three will be separated by only 1.5 degrees, a field that will easily fit into view with your binoculars. You won't want to miss the impressive choreography of this planetary trio.

More next week.

Contrary to intuition, the earliest sunrise of the year occurred last Tuesday — seven days before the solstice — for those located near 40 degrees north latitude.

Similarly, latest sunset occurs after the solstice, on June 27.

The sun reaches its highest point for

the year at midday on Tuesday of next week in the northern hemisphere.

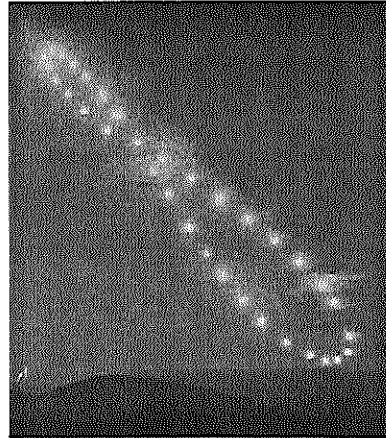
Known as the Summer Solstice (in the north), the sun swings directly over the tropic of Cancer at latitude 23-1/2 degrees. The exact moment of the solstice is 2:46 a.m. EDT.

If you plan to be in Moscow, Baghdad or Abu Dhabi at that moment the sun would be directly overhead.

So what's up with the longest day not coinciding with the earliest sunrise and latest sunset?

As subscribers to this column have learned, the reason is due to the fact that Earth's orbit is slightly out of round. That is, Earth's orbit is oval shaped instead of a perfect circle.

Another contributing factor is that Earth's rotational axis is not quite perpen-



dicular to our orbit, but slightly tilted.

These factors combine to skew the sunrise, solstice and sunset times.

They also explain what that crazy figure 8 is doing out in the Pacific ocean on a globe. That figure 8 is called an analemma and describes the apparent position of the sun in our sky at a given time each day.

For more info check out last summer's column (oh, come on, I know you all save the Barker). Or not.

Just continue to enjoy the show. Because as we know ... it's free.

-Stu Spratt

The moon for June 18, 2005 (at Midnight):
Illuminated Fraction: 0.886
2.9 days until full moon

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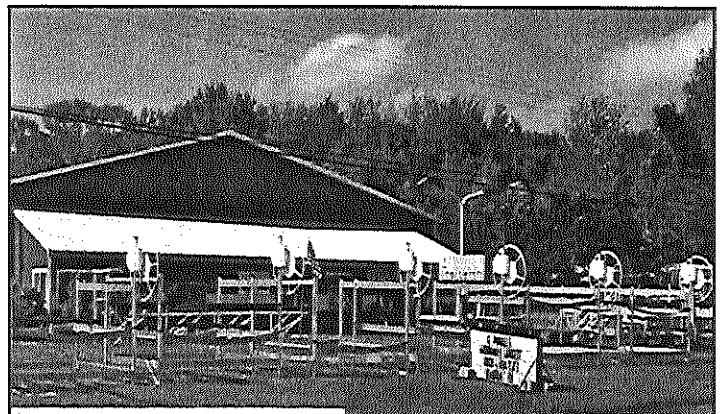
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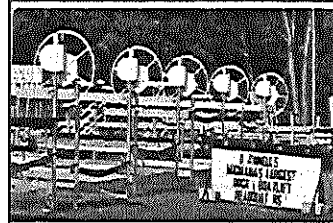


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The lonely Sunfish

by **Nancy Walker**
Birch Lake Sunfish sailor

Please understand that my darling little turquoise Sunfish is no longer lonely. After my startling and embarrassing racing debut last season, I determined to spend as much time as possible learning about her. We spent nearly every afternoon together last fall ... windy days and no wind days..beautiful sunny days and rather harsh cold days (November 26 was the last day out for the season and it was a tad chilly! Fear of hypothermia was on my mind).

We were often accompanied by my dog Molly....who thinks sailing is a blast!

While I did learn to sail her fairly well, I learned some other far more valuable things.

I have lived on Birch Lake for 25 years and like all of you, I think it is a very special place. There is a connection with the body of water though that I never knew until spending hours on this little boat. There was something about being so close to the water propelled only by the wind that gave me an appreciation for this beautiful lake far beyond what I had known. I determined leaving here could never be an option for me.

And my little Sunfish ... she is ecstatic!!! She came to my house in 1984 and sat lonely until the summer of 2004!



Nancy Walker (left) and her Sunfish at the starting line during last weekend's sailboat races.

In those 20 years, she sailed fewer than 20 times.

Now she loves Birch Lake and she loves to be sailed, but doing so requires a partner. She has begged me to plead the plight of the remaining LONELY SUNFISH. They are every where! A trip around the shore counting them (believe it or not, I counted 39 Sunfish that are not being sailed — and that's just the ones on the lake side of the homes) brought her to tears!! Could one of them belong to you?? They want to come out and play.

Take a look and if one of THE LONELY belongs to you, clean her off, hoist her sail and let her reacquaint you

with the real peace and beauty of Birch Lake. And if you want to be really nice to her, let her join in and play on Sunday (11 IN) at the races. You will have a lot of laughs, meet some of the nicest, most helpful people ever (special "hats off" to Tom Howard!) and your Sunfish will be lonely no more.

Or if you just can't do it, loan her to a neighbor or a young person eager to try. Wouldn't it be great if we had a group of kids learning to sail and race? They would be learning something not possible to learn on a tube or a jet ski ... not only sailing skill, but a love of Birch Lake that will keep them here forever.

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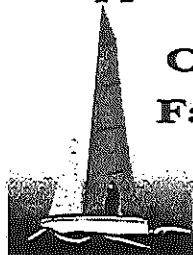
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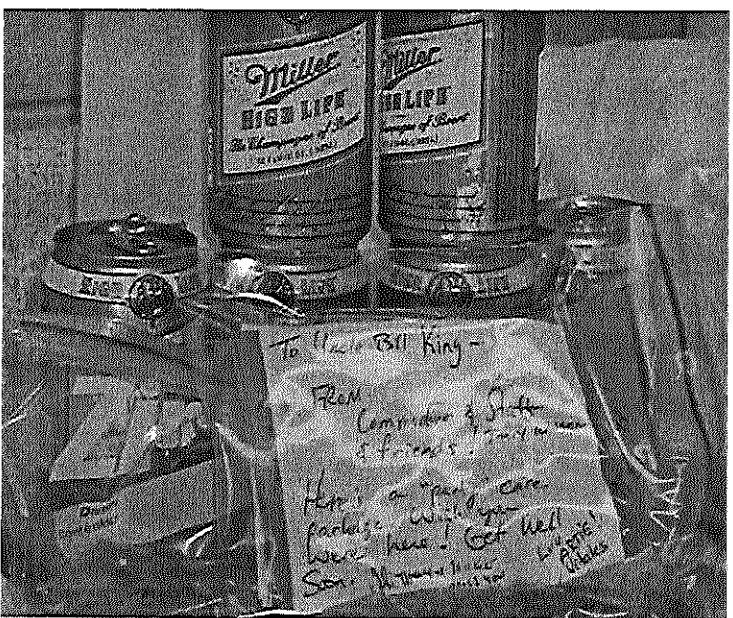
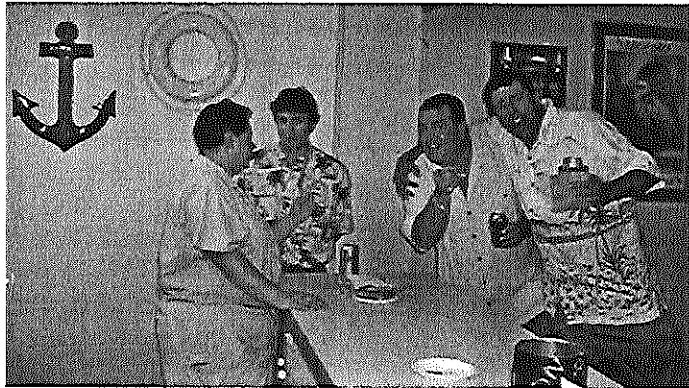
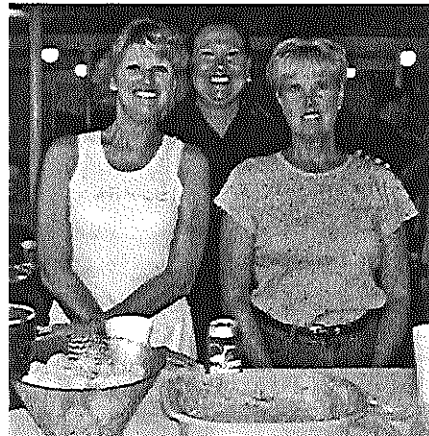
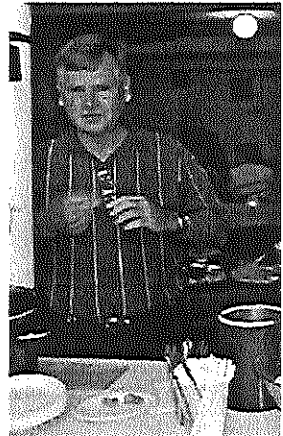
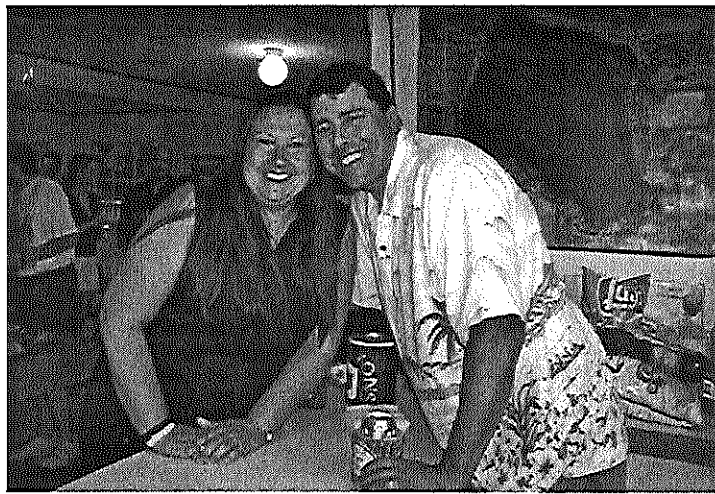
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Scenes at the Commodore's PARTY!!!!!!!



all photos courtesy of the PattiCam