



BIRCH *Barker*

vol. 77 issue 9

Weekend of
JULY 19
2025

The official publication of the Birch Lake Yacht Club

BirchLakeYachtClub.com



Clara's First Visit to Birch Lake. Clara is the granddaughter of Mike and Carey Schroer (east shore). Pictured with Grandpa Mike.

2025 BIRCH LAKE CALENDAR

July

18 - Ladies' Golf Outing, 9am
19 - Yacht Club Board Mtg, 9am
25 - Men's Golf Outing, noon
27 - "See You Soon" party for
Dennis & Claudia Phipps,
1-4pm

August

2 - Corn and Sausage Roast
9 - Don Harman Kidz Regatta
16 - Yacht Club Board Mtg, 9am
16 - Homeowners Assoc., 10am
20 - Card Night, 7pm
23 - Fall Dinner
30 & 31 Labor Day Regatta -
backup day on 9/1

September

20 - Yacht Club Board Mtg, 9am

October

25 - Bad Patty Crockpot
Challenge, 6pm

2025 BLYC Directors

Officers

Commodore: Julie Dickey (E)
Vice Comm.: Steve Frew (E)
Secretary: Mike Sheffieck (W)
Treasurer: Deb Spratt (N)
Fleet Capt: Bob Niezgodski (W)

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Dave Carroll (W)
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Liz Cover (E)
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Amber Grundy (E)
Deb Hall (C)
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Sarah Petty (N)
Claudia Phipps (N)
Vickie Rogers (C)
Rick Russwurm (N)
Ray Scholes (S)
Scott Troeger (E)
Phil Vitale (E)
Sandy Vitale (E)
Dan Waxman (E)
Sue Williams (S)

Committee Chairs

Water Quality:

Patrick Welch (S)

Homeowners Association:

Blair Garceau (E)

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Hello to all at Birch Lake! I would like to follow up and acknowledge individuals and families highlighted in last weeks July 12th Birch Barker.

Congratulations to the DeYoung family for receiving the Grand Champion Award for their "Spidey and Friends" decorated boat! Also Congrats to all the participants for achieving "Bests" in other categories! Great job to all the creative participants!

Thanks to the Grand Marshalls, Scott and Holly Troeger for leading the parade. Also special thanks to the judges, Phyllis Rasmussen, Ciara Rasmussen, and Sonia Vitale for their contributions. Thanks to Dan Waxman and all of the 12 participants for keeping this fun Birch Lake 4th of July tradition alive and strong.

The last Barker highlighted two family stories from the past. They are so rich in family history. First, special thanks to the Cowen family for sharing their past in the Birch Lake History column. Their interesting history dates back from the 1940s. Your story and photos demonstrate your unique journey from the past to the present. It is an amazing sequence of events that include multiple generations.

A second story was found in the Water Quality Report. Thank you, Scott Troeger for sharing your personal memories of growing up at Birch Lake. Scott has witnessed many

changes through the years. It was interesting to see how things have changed through the decades. Scott has a lifetime of fun experiences to remember and treasure. He has always appreciated the beauty of Birch Lake sparkling like diamonds. He has seen the importance of water quality evolve at Birch Lake.

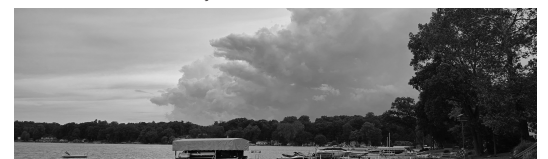
We can even more appreciate the importance of remaining focused on water quality now and in the future. Please consider donating to the Water Quality Fund. Fewer than half of our residents have contributed. We all appreciate having one of the most pristine lakes in Michigan.

Please refer to the Birch Lake calendar for more July upcoming events. There will be a gathering at the BLYC on July 27th from 1pm-4pm for Dennis and Claudia Phipps. Although they will be moving, they plan to stay connected to Birch Lake. We hope to see them often!

The BLYC board meeting is on July 19 at 9am. Keep in mind, that all BLYC members are welcome to attend board meetings.

We come from many different places, but we are all in the same boat, we love, Birch Lake!

~Commodore Julie



Interesting clouds over the west shore. Photo credit to Bob King.



The 2025 Birch Barker is
generously sponsored by Culver's.
See ad on page 2.

The Barker will consider ads, photos, and editorial content for publication.

Email items to birchbarker1@gmail.com.

For editorial concerns, contact editor Amber Grundy at birchbarker1@gmail.com or 574-315-0227.

For delivery concerns, contact Ron Niezgodski at birchbass1@gmail.com or 269-476-9317.

For all other BLYC matters, contact Commodore Julie Dickey at jdjuls@aol.com or 574-220-9132.

DEADLINE for submissions is always NOON on the Tuesday of the week before publication.

UPCOMING EVENTS

"See You Soon" Party!

Please join us for a "See You Soon" party for Dennis and Claudia Phipps at the Yacht Club on July 27, 2025 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. Details to follow.

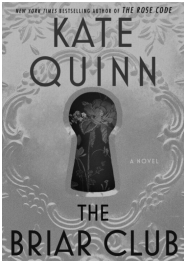


Men's Golf Outing

DEADLINE APPROACHING for Golf Outing Entries! The deadline to register for this year's Golf Outing is **Friday, July 18th**. The registration form is on page 5 of this Barker. Dinner (Steak and Chicken) and awards will follow the golfing at Sauganash. Door prize donations are welcome! Contact John with any questions (574-535-3736).

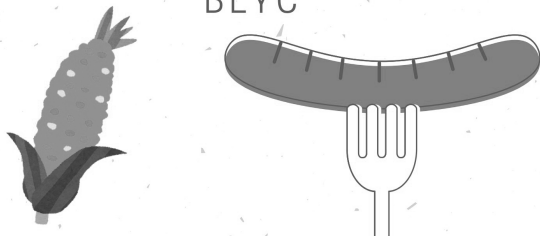
Book Club

Correction! Our July meeting will be July 22 at Ronnie Eshleman's house, discussing *The Briar Club* by Kate Quinn. Any questions, or if you'd like to join in the fun, contact Jackie Frew: seeitall8@gmail.com or call/text 708-285-2999.



BIRCH LAKE ANNUAL CORN & SAUSAGE ROAST

August 2, 2025, from 5-7 PM at
BLYC



\$5 HOTDOG MEAL, \$10 SAUSAGE
MEAL, \$12 CHICKEN MEAL



**August 9
2025**

Arrive at 11am at the Caplis home, 14901 Birch North Shore Drive, on the north side of the lake. Hot dogs and bratwurst will be served. Then, around noon, the sailors will pair up with the kids and take them out for a few races to experience sailing.

The only rules are that everyone must bring and wear a Personal Flotation Device, every sailboat has a kid on board, and that the kids have fun. If anyone has questions or wants to give us a heads up that they'll be attending the Kidz Regatta, feel free to contact me at rjniezgodski@gmail.com, or look me up in the directory and give me a call.

WELCOME to DELICIOUS



VISIT YOUR LOCAL CULVER'S RESTAURANT:

Niles, MI	Three Rivers, MI
Sturgis, MI	Granger, IN
Coldwater, MI	Mishawaka, IN



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ODDS AND ENDS

Ladies Weekly Golf

We usually tee off Monday mornings and follow up with lunch after the nine-hole “adventure.” We don’t keep track of scores and welcome all levels of players. The only judgment and competition is with yourself. If you have questions or are interested in golf or just lunch, contact Blair Garceau (269-476-9862).

Yacht Club Dues

Hey Lakers! Have you contributed to the Yacht Club yet this year? If not, why not? Our annual dues are a pittance so, it can’t be that. BLYC does way more than host parties [insert the long list, starting with protecting water quality, etc., etc.] so, it can’t be that. Your weekly Birch Barker is an ongoing expense and ... delivered by a great crew of volunteers. Pry those purses open and support our Club!
~Chrys A. Lis

A Note About Birch Lake

This is a brief reminder of how important Birch Lake is to all of us. The lake’s clear water, the absence of invasive species, and its overall health are essential to our shared enjoyment—now and for generations to come.

I recently read this week’s Birch Barker and was most concerned by the graph showing that only 40% of lake residents have contributed to the Water Quality Fund. That number needs to grow.

If you haven’t given yet, please consider doing so today. Whether it’s \$5, \$10, \$25 or more—every dollar helps. You don’t need to be a member of the Yacht Club to support the lake. This is bigger than that. This is about something we all love and rely on.

Protecting and preserving Birch Lake should be a top priority for all of us. Please take the time to contribute. The future of our lake depends on the actions we take now—and continue to take in the years to come.

Birch Lake Floating Keychains are still available for purchase for \$5.00 each. 100% of proceeds go to the Water Quality Fund. Text or call **Jennifer Ball at 574-535-3733** or **Cindy Bernaciak at 773-401-9191** to get yours.

Barker Newsies

This week’s Barker delivery spotlight is on our youngest delivery “kid”, Leila Petty. Leila took over the north side/ west route from her mother Sarah who decided it was time to pass the delivery torch. Sarah and husband Ken also have 3 sons Cooper, Cam and Ben and the Petty children are now the 4th generation of the O’Brien family on the north side. Papa John and Nancy O’Brien purchased the original cottage in 1956 and Sarah’s mother Anne was one of 5 children who spent their summers on Birch Lake. Ken and Sarah purchased the property in 2011 so their children could enjoy the lake and spend time with their cousins as Sarah’s sister Megan and husband Tom Caplis bought a cottage on the north side that was once owned by their mother Anne. Leila’s favorite section of the Barker is the Funnies and Sarah’s likes the Word Search. So a big thanks to Delivery Girls Leila(current) and Sarah(retired)!



CPR / AED Refresher

On Saturday, August 16 at 10am, Birch Lakers are invited to join us at the Homeowner’s Association Meeting for a refresher course on how to give CPR and operate the AEDs we have around the lake. **Please note: this is NOT a certification course**, but rather a review of basic skills. We plan for it to last about one hour and you will have the opportunity to practice giving CPR using a dummy, and simulate using an AED with a training device.

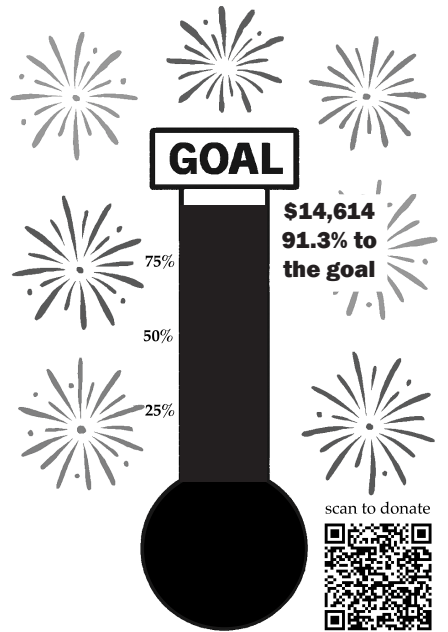
Slow Down Signs

“Slow Down” signs are available for lake home owners. Contact Blair Garceau (269-476-9862) if you need a sign for your yard. Courtesy of the BL Home Owners Association.



Birch Lake Yacht Club FIREWORKS FUND

Our goal for 2025 is \$16,000
Contribute now at
<https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com>



The Printed Barker

The Birch Barker is delivered to all of the homes on Birch Lake each week, and is available online at

[birchlakeyachtclub.com](https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com)

The submission deadline is noon on Tuesday of the week before publication. Contributions can be emailed to

birchbarker1@gmail.com.

To buy an ad or for more info, contact Amber at birchbarker1@gmail.com or 574-315-0227. Advertising rates are posted at

[birchlakeyachtclub.com/advertise](https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com/advertise)

THANK YOU to all of our 2025 Barker advertisers! Please check them all out on the BLYC website and support our advertisers.



Yacht Club Building Use

For information on the rules and requirements, or to make arrangements to use the Birch Lake Yacht Club building for a non-BLYC event, call or text Sandy Vitale at 269-858-8184, or email sv6102@gmail.com.

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blairgarceau@gmail.com

Water Quality Committee
Patrick Welch (S) 574-536-7344
patrick.welch2017@gmail.com



Friday, July 25: *Memphis Underground*
Friday, August 22: *Whistle Pigs*

The COA's Summer Concert Series is back by popular demand. Join us at the COA Lowe Center's Pavilion for some great music and an opportunity to purchase food from our food truck vendors. Bring a chair or blanket enjoy three FREE outdoor concerts!

Food is available from 5:30-7:30pm
Concerts begin at 7:00pm

more info -->



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SPYNOFFS

BLYC 65TH ANNUAL MEN'S GOLF OUTING

FOUR MAN FLORIDA SCRAMBLE

Friday, July 25, 2025

Shotgun Start at **NOON**

Sauganash Country Club
61270 Lutz Rd
Three Rivers, MI

Dinner and awards at Sauganash
Cocktail hour at 5pm
Dinner and Awards at 6pm

REGISTRATION INCLUDES:
Four Man Scramble
Team Prizes⁺ & Contests
Cocktail Hour & Dinner

Questions? Contact John Ball (john.ball0452@gmail.com or 574-535-3736)

⁺ Donations of door & team prizes are needed. If you have access to golf- or lake-related merchandise that could be donated, please contact John.

ALL ENTRIES DUE BY JULY 18

2025 BLYC Men's Golf Outing Foursome Registration

\$75 per man*

Please PRINT names:

Team Captain: _____ Player 3: _____

Player 2: _____ Player 4: _____

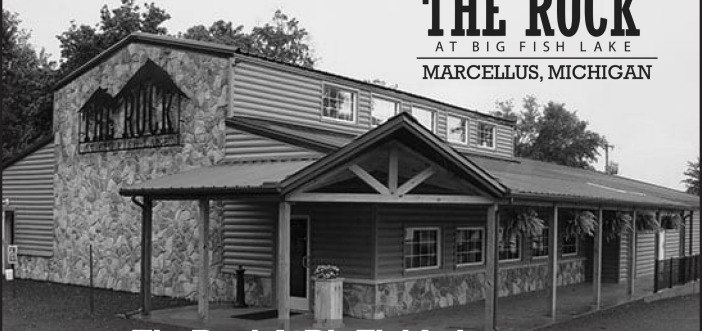
Questions? Contact John Ball (john.ball0452@gmail.com or 574-535-3736)

Please make checks payable to BLYC and mail to:

John Ball
63690 Birch Rd.
Vandalia, MI 49095

***Individual registrations available.**
If you don't have a team, contact John
and he can match you up!

Join us for dinner!



TheRockAtBigFishLake.com
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Sunday & Monday, 4-9pm
Thursday through Saturday, 4-10pm
Closed Tuesday & Wednesday

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Lake References Available

WATER QUALITY REPORT: LAKER OR TRUNK SLAMMER?

Those of us who have spent years on Birch Lake take pride in our water quality – we are "Lakers!" It means you will hear children and grandchildren giggle as they play in the water. They dig in the sand and later it turns into a muck fight. They practice their swim strokes, jump off the pier into your arms, then they do it by themselves to howls and clapping. They learn to ski, then graduate to slalom, then maybe wake board or surf (with proper wake usage, of course).

It's also tube rides with brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, moms, dads and friends while continuing to laugh and scream. Kids learn to fish, catch minnows and turtles, and kayak around the lake. And they get paid a penny a piece for every Zebra Mussel they remove from the pier! They learn to sail a Sunfish and then an MC and maybe enter a regatta. Birch Lake provides a place for kids and grandkids to enjoy a couple weeks at Camp Tannadoonah. They enjoy the magic of sparklers, the sweet taste of S'mores, and then the fireworks on the 4th of July, after which the following morning the whole family heads to the camp for a breakfast of pancakes and sausage!

Lake kids suffer through grown up boat rides and fall asleep in grandma's arms. Or they practice "driving" the boat with grandpa. They enjoy childhood memories that shaped generations to respect and cherish the lake we share. It needs to become a part of who they are and the kinds of adults they will be. They will be kind, considerate of neighbors, and environmentally responsible. They will be a part of a community that will always support and care for them. Just ask a young adult lake kid about the support of the lake community.

We need to protect this lake so all our families can enjoy these memories. We all are a part of the future of our beloved lake. We hope we can entrust the care of Birch Lake to the next generation. We should all know the rules that will help our



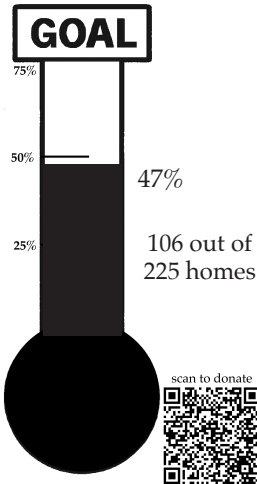
lake continue to be a place to treasure. If we get lazy and blow grass clippings and leaves into our lake, use our wake boats irresponsibly, use fertilizer with phosphorus on our lawns, forget to keep our shorelines "turtle" friendly, and are not careful with runoff into the lake from our yards and the road – we will suffer the consequences, long and short term, along with our future Birch Lakers.

Growing up, I was taught there were "Lakers" and there were "Trunk Slammers." We were honored to be called "Lakers." We had a commitment to the care of the lake. "Trunk Slammers" were those whose only interest in the lake was temporary. Let's all join together and have the honor of being called "Lakers" – those with a commitment to the quality of Birch Lake. Contribute to our investment in the future of Birch Lake. Your Water Quality donations mean that our children and grandchildren will always have the gift of Birch Lake along with priceless childhood lake memories it provides.

Be a "Laker" - it's your investment in our future.

Birch Lake Yacht Club WATER QUALITY FUND

Our goal for 2025 is to have 75% of homes on the lake contribute.
Contribute now at
<https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com>



THE SIX COMMANDMENTS OF BIRCH LAKE WATER QUALITY

- I. Thou shalt prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).
- II. Thou shalt minimize surface runoff.
- III. Thou shalt minimize the effects of waves.
- IV. Thou shalt protect and expand Natural Shorelines.
- V. Thou shalt not allow phosphorus, nutrients, and other undesirable chemical elements to enter our lake.
- VI. Thou shalt remain informed and active about other Water Quality issues.

Keep Birch Lake Beautiful

Phyllis Rasmussen (west side) has partnered with Birch Lake Water Quality to sell one of a kind Birch Lake gear, and 20% of all proceeds will be donated directly to the Water Quality fund. There are three designs (Gull, Fish, and Turtle), and three garment choices (T-Shirt, Crewneck, and Hoodie).



Scan to order
yours today!

www.keepbirchlakebeautiful.com

Thank you Coy Jankowski for your beautiful art donation!
Thank you to the Birch Lake community for submitting your wonderful photos which are shared on the ordering site.
Thank you to everyone involved in this project.

Let's keep our lake clean and beautiful for years to come!
This project helps support keeping our earth clean, our lakes clean, and ensuring our waterways are safe for children to swim in! You can make the difference!

Contact Phyllis by phone (574-807-1924) or email (keepbirchlakebeautiful@gmail.com) with any questions or to place an order by phone.

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FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER

This past weekend, unfortunately, it was another weekend with no sailboat racing. Everyone, please do a wind dance or pray to the wind/sailing gods for some good wind at sailboat racing time. We sailors would love to be able to race.

Noted a few Barkers ago, Diamond Lake is hosting the Interlake MC Regatta this year. This is the same event we hosted here at Birch Lake last year in memory of Earl Troeger, Jr. The event is only a week away, "on Saturday, July 26th". I have heard the registration numbers have been low. If you have an MC and a way to get your boat down the road to Diamond Lake, I encourage you to register and represent Birch Lake in this regatta. You can register for the event at <https://www.diamondlakesailingschool.com/>

Hey, the regatta is on a Saturday, so maybe there will be some wind. The cost is \$50, and the registration deadline is Thursday, July 24th at 7:00 pm. See the ad next to this article, or as always, you can contact me for more details. I also encourage anyone interested in sailing to check out the Diamond Lake sailing school at the aforementioned website. It could be a good way to learn, or ask a sailor around the lake. I'm sure they would be willing to help you out.

Also, a reminder that the Kidz Regatta is coming up in a few weeks, "Saturday, August 9th at 11:00 AM". No need to know how to sail. Sailors will take the kids out in their boats to experience a sailboat race and teach them a little about sailing. It's also a great event to let kids around the lake get to know each other.

~Fleet Captain Bob Niezgodski

Heritage and Horizons Interlake MC Regatta

Diamond Lake Yacht Club, Cassopolis, MI
July 26, 2025

Join us as we celebrate our sailing history and look forward to our future on Diamond Lake!

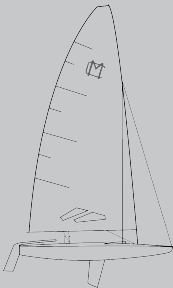
We are hosting the traveling regatta, welcoming sailors from Birch Lake, Corey Lake, Eagle Lake, Indian Lake, & Diamond Lake. Sailors from other lakes interested in participating, please contact the Regatta Chair.

Registration Fee: \$50

Includes light breakfast, t-shirt, boxed lunch, and refreshments

Agenda:

- 7:30-9:00am: Boat launching, set up, light breakfast
- 9:00: Skippers meeting
- 10:00: First of 3 races begins
- 2:30 (approximately): Awards, lunch, refreshments



"Rooted in Tradition. Sailing into Tomorrow!"

Contact Amy Usher, Rear Commodore
amywusher@gmail.com, 630-272-4023

Sunday is SAILING DAY!
Races start at 11am
Please steer clear of the course!

BIRCH LAKE SAILING SCORES

Season Standings

	Total Points	% Races Finished	Average Points	Season Rank
MC Scow / Sailor				
Scott Troeger #1489	12721	73	1590	1
Bill Luecht #1579	11870	73	1484	2
Phil Vitale #500	13158	82	1462	3
Amber Grundy #1173	13004	82	1445	4
Patrick Welch #1979	15671	100	1425	5
Steve Frew #676	6413	45	1283	6
Sandy Vitale #2159	7356	55	1226	7

	Total Points	% Races Finished	Average Points	Season Rank
Sunfish Sailor				
Rick Russwurm	12565	100	1571	1
Stewart Spratt	11783	100	1473	2
Pete Soldato	4417	38	1472	3
Amy Troeger	7155	63	1431	4
Scott Sortal	4186	38	1395	5
Bill Butler	1369	0	1369	6
Bob Niezgodski	10895	100	1362	7
Herb Cleveland	1225	13	1225	8

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CAMP T CORNER

We are beginning Session 6 this week at Camp T! We are getting busier and busier as the weeks go on, which we have very much been enjoying. In addition to our regularly-scheduled activities, we look forward to hosting Advanced Fishing, Basketball, and Theatre this week.

Advanced Fishing will include the campers learning different types of fishing and practicing fishing from a kayak. During Basketball, campers will improve their skills while working with counselors who have extensive experience that they are excited to pass on. In Theatre class, campers will be given a scene at the beginning of the week to perform during our closing campfire! We are excited to see them develop their talents.

This week's theme is Hallo-Week. Although the theme of each week does not have a major effect on the campers' experience, it does have a few influences. For example, this week we have decorated the Dining Hall with spooky decorations. We have chosen Halloween-themed crafts for handcraft, and will play Halloween music at different opportunities throughout the week.

Evening activities also can coordinate with the theme. **So this week, we will be "Trick or Treating" around the lake!** We will be coming around to serenade you on Wednesday, July 23rd, starting at about 7:30pm. We would love to see you

LAKE SERENADE!

Wednesday, July 23, 7:30pm

Campers and staff will be walking around the lake to sing to lake residents. Please come out to the road so we can sing to you! One group will walk along the cove and west side (usually to about Niezgodski's), and the other group will walk around the north shore and east side (usually to about Vitale's).

and sing you a song or two while we are out! Although we are "Trick or Treating," please understand that we in no way expect any treats. The treat for us is to be able to share our songs and voices! We hope to see you there!

This summer, we have been able to add something very special to our weekly schedule. Every Thursday afternoon, we have had individuals from the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi come and join us to teach us about their culture. They bring drums and sing and dance for us, showing us their ceremonial regalia. They point out the different parts of the dance and what they mean and the significance of each piece that adorns their regalia.

They have taught us words from their language, and even invited us to dance with them! They talk about their history and their present day lives, inviting campers to ask questions and



to share their stories. We are so thankful that we can have the opportunity to share this with the campers, and for how welcoming the Pokagon band has been. What a great way that we can all celebrate who we are and where we come from!

Lastly, I wanted to thank everyone who came out for the pancake breakfast! I loved seeing everyone at the Trading Post! It is always such a joy to be able to share and relive camp memories with each other. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did.

Have a great week this week, and we will see you around the lake!

~Miss Meghan at Camp T

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BIRCH LAKE HISTORY: THE "LOVE SHACK"

Editor's Note: This season in the Barker, we plan to feature different properties on the lake each week, with historical information about the families who have lived there, photos, and stories. If you would like to submit content about your home at the lake, we will gladly accept new submissions! Please send to birchbarker1@gmail.com

Our time at *The Love Shack* began in June of 2010, although that wasn't when my Birch Lake days began. Let me first digress a little.

My family started out at Birch Lake by driving around the lakes area on a fall color tour and discovered an old farmhouse for sale on the East Side. They purchased the house, barn and property from the Anderson's in 1970 (ish).

My brother Steve and I were summer kids for a couple of years, enjoying all the lake had to offer. Once the house was remodeled in 1973-74, we moved to the lake full-time, one of only a dozen or so families that lived on the lake year round at that time.

We utilized the barn for more than the parties that had previously been thrown (judging by all the old streamer bits stapled to the big beams), housing three horses, some chickens and a lamb that was abandoned by her mama when she was born. Dad and Linda were married in 1977 and my siblings Tina and Matt Strukel moved in and joined in on all of the lake fun.

The "Curtis Compound" grew when my grandparents built a house on property to the north (now Gaik's), and in 1993 my dad and Linda built a house on the hill by the barn (recently purchased by the Mosiers). The original house stayed in the family when Steve bought it, and he still resides there with his wife Deborah. While I didn't have my own place on the lake, I was lucky enough to have two houses at Birch Lake to visit during the summers until Eric and I bought the cottage from the Dennert's in 2010, which we gave the name of The Love Shack.

The cottage was built sometime in the early 1900's in the slight inlet area that was called Willow Beach. In the 1860 plat map of Cass County, the land that would

later be platted as Willow Beach was owned by M. Rawson, and in 1872 it was owned by J. Treego. By 1897, the land was owned by Clifford A. Lyon, who had it platted as Willow Beach sometime before 1914. In 1934, Lester Myers purchased the lot where the cottage is located and then sold it to William Wagner in 1944.



1947 view of the cottage

In 1946, Laurence and Verna Dennert bought the cottage from the Wagners, for \$500 and four generations of the family enjoyed their time spent at the lake. The Dennerts had two sons, Larry, Jr. and Paul, who were 6 and 1 at the time they acquired the cottage.

As a high schooler at South Bend Central their son, Paul, was an original member of a local band called *The Rivieras*, formed in 1961. The band was named for a then-popular Buick sedan. In 1963, *The Rivieras* recorded "California Sun", which climbed the Rock Charts, topping out at #2 behind *The Beatles'* "I Want to Hold Your Hand"! Birch Lakers from the 1960s and 70s fondly recall jamming at the lake with Paul, who was the drummer.



*The Rivieras in 1963.
Paul Dennert on the far right.*

Today the cottage still retains the old knotty pine walls and funky tile floors, which I love! It's small (which is where "Shack" comes in) but is perfect for what we wanted, since we weren't planning on being full-time lakereers.

Thankfully my love for all the charm and whimsy, and my intent on keeping



Early view of the cottage



c. 2007 when the sewers were put in it a cottage hit a soft spot with Larry and Kay Dennert, and they sold the cottage to us since they knew we were not going to tear it down and rebuild. We did some remodeling, most notably the glass sliders on the front and adding the deck, and I'm forever grateful that Larry was able to visit a couple of times before he passed to see the progress – he was so delighted with the improvements.

He said how much he knew Kay was kicking him in the behind for not doing the same thing while they had it (unfortunately Kay passed the winter before we bought the cottage). In good ol' Birch Lake community / family fashion, Mike Dennert (Larry and Kay's son) stopped by the cottage a few years after we bought it. While I'm sure it was bittersweet, he too was happy with the changes we had made and appreciative that we kept it as a cottage. There have been some summer days that we were not going to be staying at the cottage and offered Mike the chance to stay and enjoy the cottage once again. Once a Birch Laker, always a Birch Laker!



The "Love Shack" today

We hope we're good stewards of both the cottage and the lake, as there is no place better to call home.

~Karen Curtis-Miller (east shore) contributed this column and photos.

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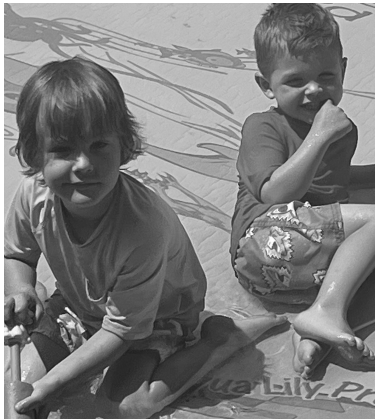
BARKER KIDS OF THE WEEK



Want your kid to be a Barker kid of the week? Send your photos to birchbarker1@gmail.com



The Ponsler / Sine grandkids (south shore) enjoyed some time at Birch Lake! Upper Left: Beau Ponsler, the Lake Monster!, Middle: Cousins Shane Sine, Beau Ponsler, and Ace Ponsler. Upper Right: Ace Ponsler showing the Wolfpack pride (for his cousin, Kyle Ponsler, who swims at NC State), and left, Ace Ponsler CANNONBALL!



First time entering the parade and the kids had a blast! Grandkids of The Hogobooms (south shore): Madi, Andrew, Clay and Atlas.



right: Joseph Davis (grandon of Sue Davis, east shore) and Kayson Ball (grandon of John and Jennifer Ball, east shore) loving their time together on Birch Lake. Joseph staying at his new "Holiday House" (west shore) on Birch Lake his parents, Marie and Patrick Davis

Joseph Davis and Kayson Ball enjoying the sand toys.



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SUMMER RECIPES: FRESH SUMMER BERRY PIE

If there's one recipe that makes me think of summer, it's a fresh strawberry pie. Fresh, cool and sweet, this strawberry pie recipe came from my mom (Sherry Holleman) on a handwritten notecard that said "Azar's Strawberry Pie." Azar's (Big Boy) is a regional restaurant that is known for their comfort food and homemade dessert, especially this strawberry pie recipe. It's a must for those fresh summer berries!

While the original recipe only includes strawberries, I like to make it with a mix of strawberries, raspberries, and blueberries, or some combination of those three. Make it with a homemade crust, or a frozen pie crust - either way is delicious. It's a perfect dessert on a hot summer evening! Make sure to plan ahead - you will want to refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight before serving.

Ingredients:

- 1 9-inch pie shell, baked until golden brown
- 4 cups of strawberries, sliced (alternatively, try it with a mix of strawberries, blueberries, and red raspberries)
- 1 cup cold water
- ¾ cup of granulated sugar (adjust to taste - I usually use less)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 3 ounces strawberry or red raspberry gelatin



Recipe and photo credit to Food.com

Instructions:

1. Bake pie shell as directed. Cool completely.
2. Clean and slice berries, and place in shell.
3. In small saucepan, mix cold water, sugar, and cornstarch. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Boil until the mixture is clear and thick.
4. Remove the saucepan from heat and add the strawberry gelatin, stirring until dissolved. Let cool to room temperature (this is important!).
5. Pour sauce over the strawberries in the pie shell. Refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.
6. Serve chilled with whipped cream.

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Infant and Child Life Vests: I have a collection fo infant and child-size life vests that my kids have outgrown.

Kids' Bikes: Also have 2 youth size bikes that need some TLC. One is a 12", and two are 16". Two are operable as is, the 3rd needs some repairs. If anyone is in need of the life vests or the bikes, please call Amber at (574) 315-0227 or email amber.grundy@gmail.com.

SERVICES

I do **sewing and mending** at fair prices – zippers, hemming, small alterations. Call Kathy at 269-476-9317.

Errands Services. Hi all! My name is Ruby Sandler, I am 16 years old and live on the North Shore. I am offering a service for the summer that includes picking up to-go order groceries from Martin's (or any other store that may offer that around this area), and bringing them back to your home. I will also be available to run errands such as taking things to Goodwill, watering plants when you are out of town, walking/checking on pets, etc. I will be available 4 days a week: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9am - 4pm, excluding the week of July 26th - August 3rd. I will be available until middle of August. If anyone is interested, feel free to contact me at 574-261-0121.

SAILBOATS

Sad Sunfish Seeking Sailors! Our boat pines to go racing on Sundays. Please borrow the boat (rigged and ready)! It's a great way to "kick the tires" at no expense. Contact the Kings at 574-299-0705 and leave a message.



Sad Sunfish

Classified Ads in the Barker are free to current BLYC members. The cost is \$5 per week for non members. Send your ad to birchbarker1@gmail.com Deadline is Tuesday noon for the upcoming weekend's Barker.

FOUND

Tube Found. A tube was found on the east shore after the recent storms. If you are missing a tube, contact Carl Klappauf (269) 476-2663 to describe it and claim it.

Birkenstock Sandal

Found floating along the west shore on the Tuesday before 4th of July. Call Niezgodski's to claim (269) 476-9317.



LOST

LOST: Black seat cover from our boat on the North Shore. Please contact or return to Roger Falk at (269) 217-9291.

WANTED

Packing Materials: If you have any boxes, newspaper, bubble wrap, etc. that you want to get rid of please drop them off at 14719 Kiloqua Woods Ln. on the front porch. Thank you! ~Claudia and Dennis Phipps

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EMERGENCY HEART DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) locations on Birch Lake

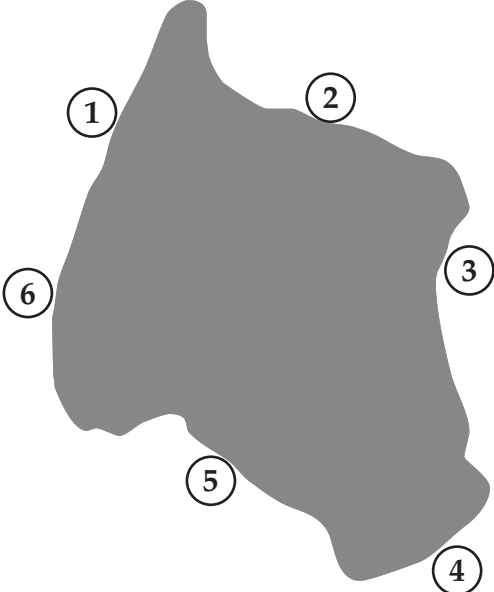
There are six (6) automated external defibrillator units (AEDs) on Birch Lake. The boxes that contain these devices are located at the following locations:

- 1. **West Shore:** Sheffieck Home
62875 Birch Lakeview Drive
- 2. **North Shore:** Smitley Home
14859 Birch Northshore Drive
- 3. **East Shore:** Vitale Home
63174 Birch Road
- 4. **Southeast Shore:** Troeger Home
63696 Birch Road
- 5. **South Shore:** Crawford Home
15046 Birch Lakeshore Drive
- 6. **Southwest Shore:** DeYoung Home
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All units are on the **ROAD SIDE** of the property and accessible by vehicle or on foot.



AED Locations



IN AN EMERGENCY

- 1. **CALL 911** and report the emergency and the patient's location
- 2. Pull the box open, remove the orange-colored unit, take it to the patient, and open the device by pressing the white lever at the bottom.
- 3. An automated voice will guide you through the setup and use of the defibrillator. Follow directions as they are given.
- 4. Continue to follow the instructions, and **stay with the patient until emergency personnel arrive.**

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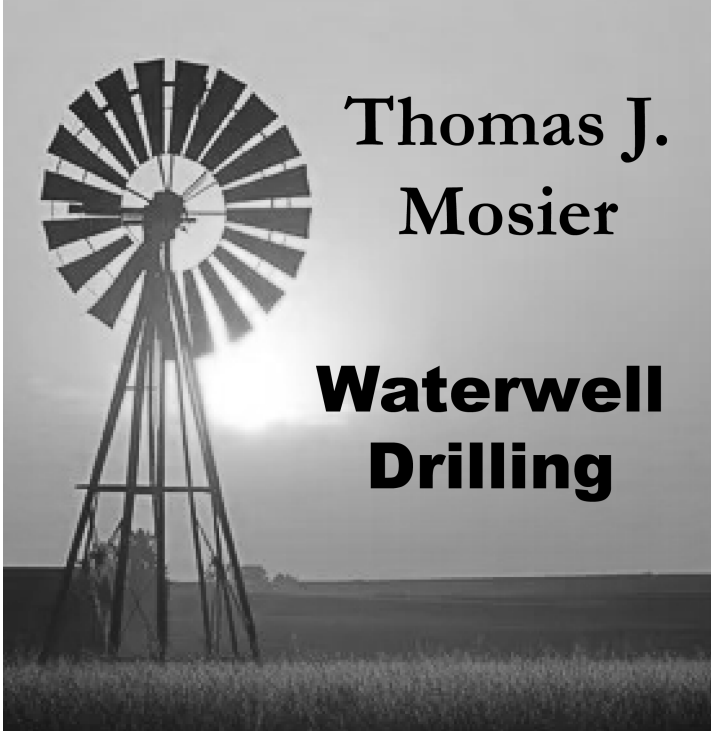


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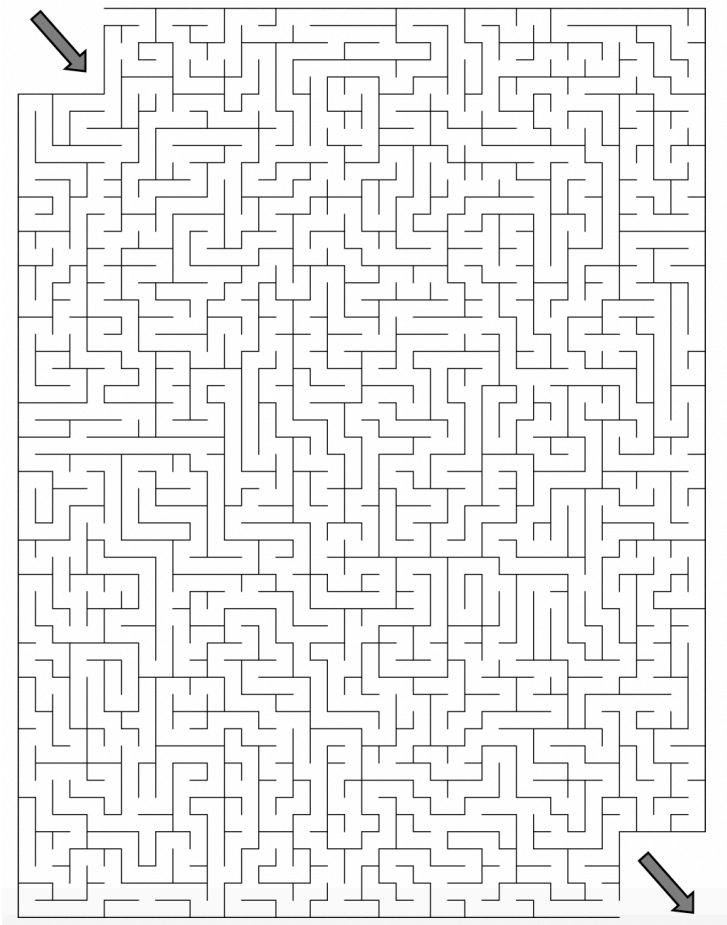
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PUZZLE PAGE

Classic Maze

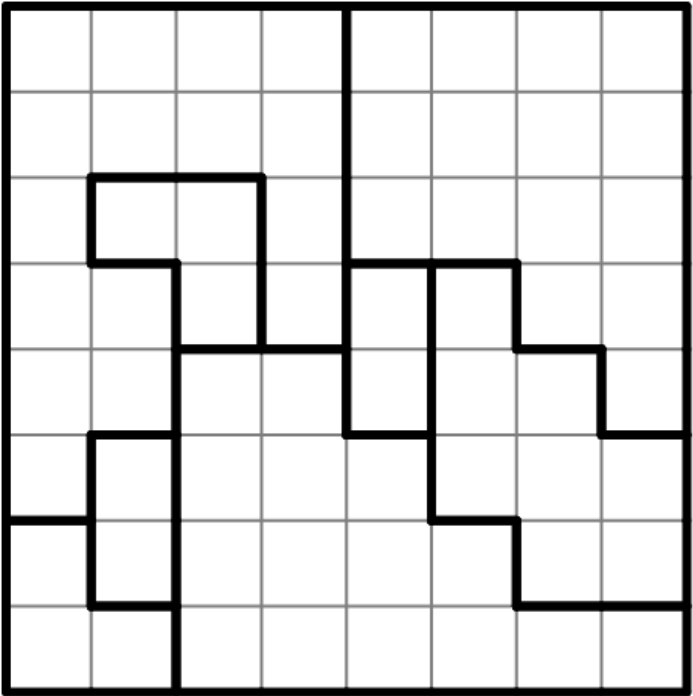


Sudoku: Difficult

	4	9	1					
		1			6			
		5	2	8			9	
	9	6			5	3		8
	1			6	3	4		
		3				9	8	
7							1	
	6			3				

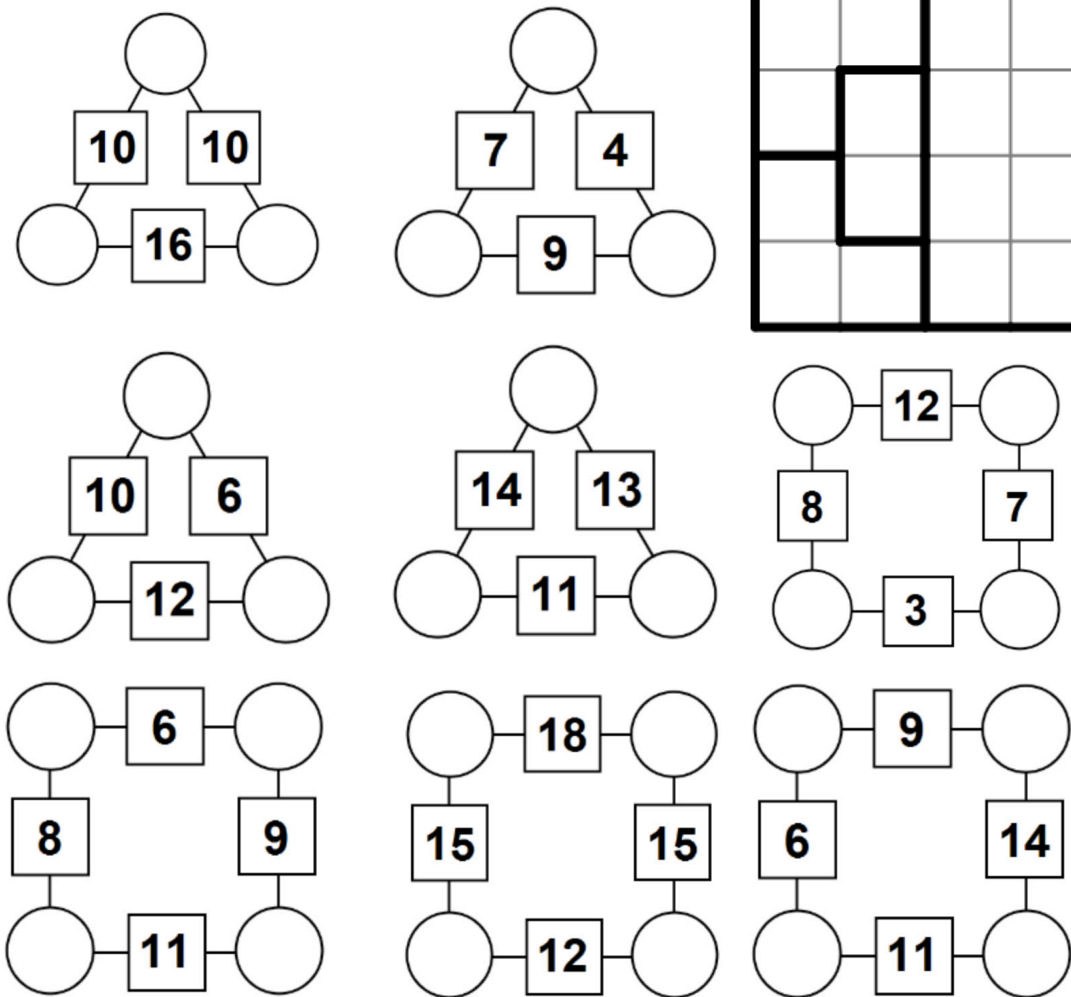
Star Battle Puzzle

Star Battle Puzzles are also known as “Two Not Touch” Puzzles. Each puzzle is divided into 8 different regions. Each region, row and column contains a single star. The stars may not be adjacent to each other (not even diagonally). Check out the example below, before you try the one above!

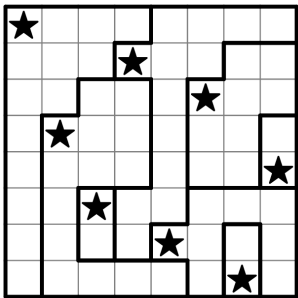


Arithmagons

The aim of an arithmagon is to work out which numbers go in the empty circles. The numbers in the square boxes are made by adding together the numbers in the circles either side. For example, if the number in the square box was 10 you could try 6 and 4, but the numbers must also add up on the other edges, making this more difficult than it first appears.



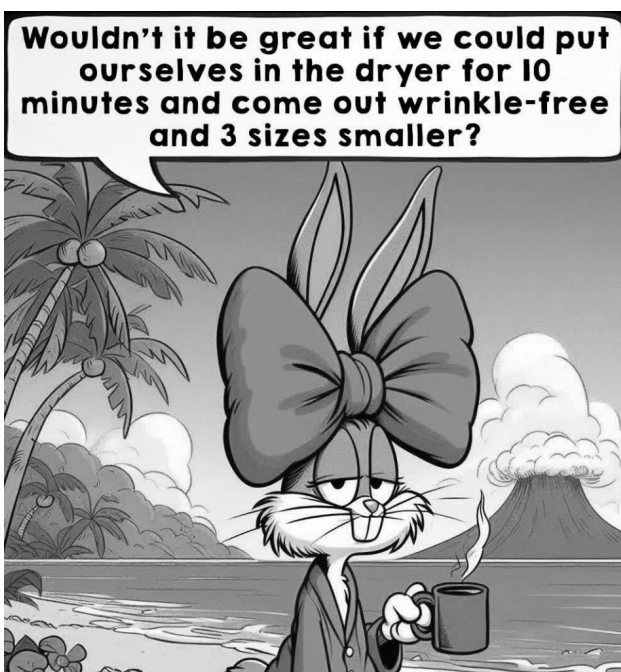
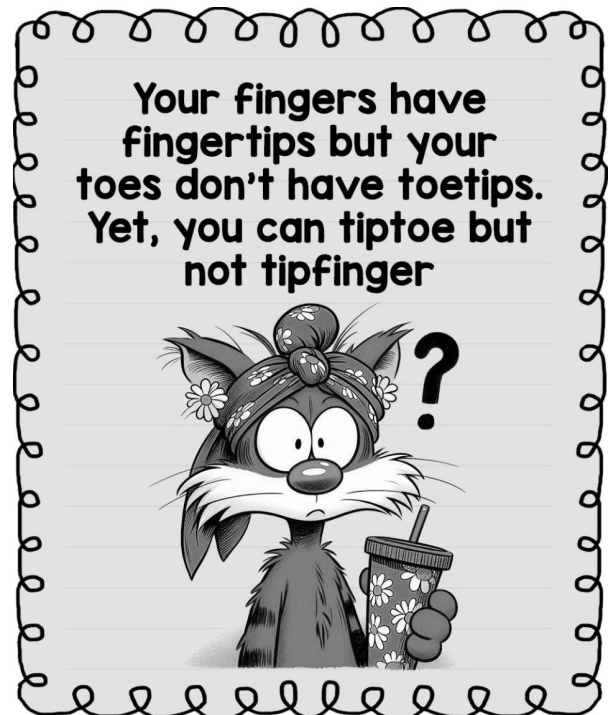
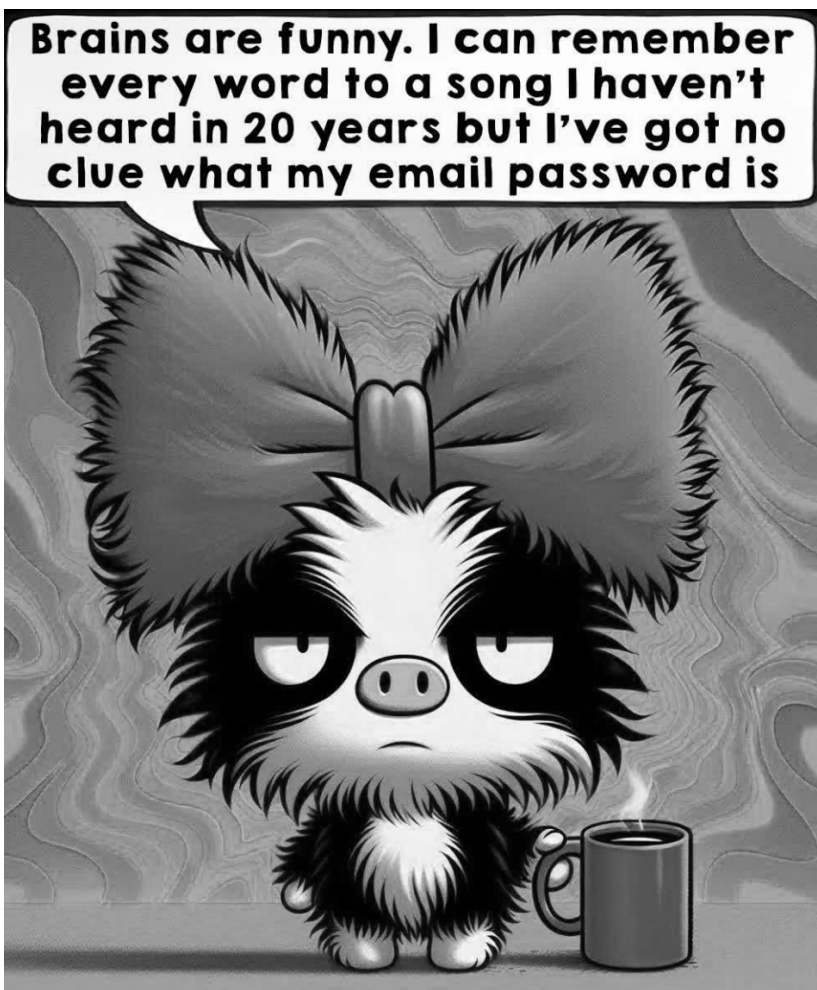
Star Battle Puzzle: EXAMPLE



Scan for Solutions



BARKER FUNNIES



I LEARNED FROM MY MISTAKES.
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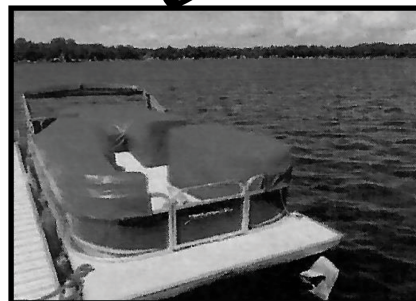
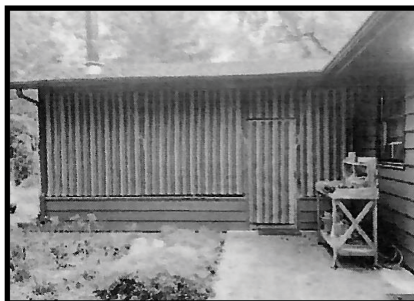


D & M CANVAS

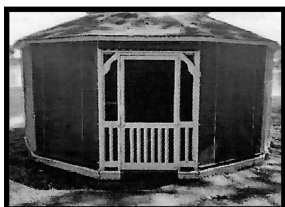
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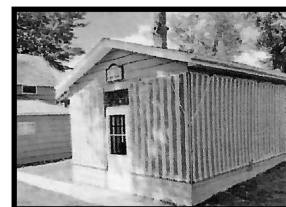
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- Monitoring water quality, which helps keep Birch Lake clean, and improves our ability to respond swiftly to treat and eradicate invasive species.
- Maintaining the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) around the lake.
- Producing and distributing the printed Birch Barker every week in the summer (and online every month in the off season).
- Publication of a biennial Directory.
- Fundraising for, planning and carrying out the 4th of July Fireworks show.
- Providing a forum and means for handling lake-wide concerns with local governmental issues.
- Helping to fund and host a variety of community-building activities.

BLYC dues are NOT used to purchase alcohol for events. All events sponsored by the Yacht Club are organized by volunteers. In 2024, the BLYC Board of Directors voted to make all events revenue-neutral and to not spend any Yacht Club funds on alcoholic beverages.

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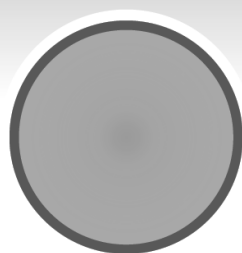
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