The official publication of the Birch Lake Yacht Club

BirchLakeYachtClub.com



2026 Commodore Steve Frew (E), 2025 Commodore Julie Dickey (E), and 2026 Vice Commodore Ron Niezgodski (W). Thank you all for your dedication to the BLYC!

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

appy Labor Day Weekend to all Birch Lakers and their friends and relatives! At this writing, it looks like it will be a beautiful weekend for many holiday activities, while enjoying Birch Lake's natural splendor.

On behalf of the BLYC, I would like to extend our thanks and congratulations to our great Past Commodore, Julie Dickey, for a job well done! I had the pleasure and privilege to assist Julie this past year, and often worked with her and her husband Kelton and their son Johnny to prepare for various BLYC events, so I know that with her nursing background, high energy, warm and friendly personality, sense of beauty, and love of people, Julie was a natural for the job. She gave us many memorable moments starting with the great Spring Dinner at the Hotel Elkhart. She also selected the blue color of the new roof on the Yacht Club, which combines perfectly with the building's blue walls. At the Fall Dinner last Saturday, Julie was presented with a thank you card signed by many Birch Lakers; a keepsake Past Commodore's Flag, and a gift certificate for dinner for two or three at The Lauber restaurant in South Bend. Congratulations and thank you again, and best wishes, Julie!

The Fall Dinner was a well-attended and fun event, themed as a Boathouse Party. Thank you to the McCoys and Wahlgrens for loaning the larger water toys that added to the boat house atmosphere. Birch Lakers are always eager to help. Blair Garceau, Vickie Rogers and Sandy Vitale gave Jackie very helpful adivice in planning the event. Bob Niezgodski made the run to Porky's and delivered a hot load of their delicious fried chicken, mojo potatoes and pizza. The menu also featured corn bread, mojo potatoes, macaroni salad, green bean casserole, cole slaw, cookies and cheesecake. A large group of Birch Lake men saw the food arriving in two vehicles, and got it all inside to the kitchen in a jiffy. Thank you, gentlemen! Many thanks to Phil and Sandy Vitale for helping set up the day before, and for acting as veteran advisors and master bartenders for the party. Thank you to Ron and Katie Niezgodski for handling the sign-in table. Thank you to our friendly and energetic servers Blair Garceau, Vickie Rogers, Sandy Vitale, Kelton Dickey, and Jackie Frew. Bigtime kitchen cleanup was efficiently done by the great team of Cam Butler, Blair Garceau, Vickie Rogers, Sandy Vitale, and Sue Williams--thank you!

In addition to being a party, the Fall Dinner is also a business meeting that is required by our bylaws. The first item on

Important Reminder!

As the summer comes to an end, please remember not to "power load" your boats when you take them out for the winter. This causes damage to the boat launch ramp. **Thank you** to everyone who makes the effort to get your boat onto the trailer without gunning it!

2025 BIRCH LAKE CALENDAR

August

30 & 31 Labor Day Regatta - backup day on 9/1

September

- 6 Sailing Awards, 11am at Niezgodski's
- 20 Yacht Club Board Mtg, 9am
- 26 Bad Patty Crockpot Challenge, 6pm **NEW DATE**

the agenda was to elect Directors to fill vacancies on our Board. Congratulations to the candidates who were all elected by unanimous vote: Sue Davis, Dan Waxman, Scott Troeger, Bernie Garceau, and Dave Carroll who all ran again after their terms expired. Patrick Welch, our Water Quality Chair, and Blair Garceau, our Homeowners' Association Chair, also were elected. Congratulations, Directors.

The second item on the agenda was to announce the name of our new Vice Commodore. Following in Past Commodore Julie's footsteps, this was done in a quiz format for the audience to guess, using 20 questions. About halfway through the questions, a lady in the back yelled out "Ron!" Unfortunately my vision is such that I could not recognize her. If she will kindly identify herself, I will gladly pubilicize her name as the winner of the quiz - publicity in the Birch Barker being the only prize. Second place (but with the same prize) was taken a few seconds later by Past Commodore Deb Hall. Congratulations Deb for correctly guessing the identity of our new Vice Commodore: Ron Niezgodski!

Ron has over 20 years' experience in Water Quality, having served as a member and twice president of the St. Joe Basin Commission which protects the entire river basin that includes Birch Lake; as well as having been of member of the Friends of the St. Joe *continued...*

The 2025 Birch Barker is generously sponsored by Culver's. See ad on page 3.

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 Comm. Steve Frew at *stephenbfrew@gmail.com* or **239-315-1177**. **DEADLINE** for submissions is always **NOON** on the Tuesday of the week before publication.

River. After moving with his beautiful wife Katie and son Bob to Birch Lake full time in 2012 and retiring in 2014, Ron has served on the BLYC Water Quality Committee for five years, ran the Spaghetti Dinner for five years, always turning a profit; manages delivery of the Birch Barker and installed the free delivery tubes; opens the Yacht Club in the spring and closes it in the fall, addressing all plumbing issues; discovered the storm damage to the roof this spring and jumped into action to prevent further damage, guided the hiring of the contractor and oversaw the repairs; eagerly volunteers at many BLYC events; is Captain of the Race Committee Boat for our sailboat fleets; and has served on the BLYC Board of Directors for three years. Congratulations Ron, and I look forward to working with you.

Commodore Julie next introduced Phyllis Rasmussen, daughter of Buzz and Linda Rasmussen. Phyllis presented a very generous donation of \$1,600 to the BLYC Water Quality Committee. Phyllis advertises Birch Lake gear in the Birch Barker, and donates 20% of all proceeds directly to BLYC Water Quality. Thank you, Phyllis!

Commodore Julie then reminded everyone about the Dave and Donna Hogoboom family. Their daughter, Jenn Boverhof, does three flash sales of Birch Lake gear per season on the BLYC website, marketed as Birch Lake Apparel. Notice is given three weeks in advance, in the Odds and Ends section of the Birch Barker, and 20% is donated to the BLYC. Over the past year, \$1,000 was given to the BLYC Water Quality Committee, and \$500 to the BLYC general fund, for a total of \$1,500. Thank you, Jenn! We are so blessed to have these two wonderful donors.

Thank you to Buzz Rasmussen for taking so many wonderful photos of the event. When the party finally ended, literally every able-bodied person present helped remove tablecloths, tables and chairs. Thank you, everyone! Thank you to our great Secretary, Mike Sheffieck, for preparing all of the detailed documents necessary for the business meeting, and for his advice and coaching. Mike was also in the last group to leave the cleanup, along with Cam Butler, Leslie King, Bob Niezgodski, Phil and Sandy Vitale, Sue Williams, and Julie and Kelton Dickey - thank you all. Finally, thank you to our great Treasurer, Deb Spratt, who managed the ticketing and all financial aspects of the event.

This is my first and last column for this year in the printed edition of the Birch Barker, but I look forward to reporting to you in the next online edition of the Birch Barker about the progress of planning for next year. In the meantime, have a safe and wonderful Labor Day Weekend.

~ Commodore Steve Frew

UPCOMING EVENTS

Bad Patty Crockpot Challenge *NEW DATE*

UPDATE on Date/Time for Crock Pot Challenge! The seasons are changing and so is the Crock Pot Challenge! Please mark your calendars for *FRIDAY*, *September 26*. Bring your crock full of your favorite soup recipe or dessert recipe. For those that aren't up to making something, please come and be a taste tester/voter. It's our last event of the season and a great way to bid a fond farewell to those that leave for the cold months. Those bringing a crock pot, please arrive at 6:30. Those coming for food and friendship, please arrive at 7:00 (so we can anonymously set up our entries).

Grown Up Camp at Camp T

This year's Grown Up Camp weekend is scheduled for Friday, September 26th through Sundy, September 28th. If you've never joined us before, what are you waiting for? There are multiple registration options for the weekend - you can come for the full weekend from Friday through Sunday. Or you can join us for just one night and one day (Friday night through Saturday, or Saturday all day through Sunday morning), or for the full day and evening on Saturday, or just for dinner on Saturday evening!

We would LOVE to have a bunch of our Birch Lake neighbors join us this year! If you're interested in registering, you can find all of the information on our website (go to *tannadoonah*. *org/gathering* or scan the QR Code ----->



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).

JAYWALKER RESTAURANT

Conveniently located close to Birch Lake!

Open for Lunch and Dinner

Located on the beautiful St. Joseph River

10188 US 12, Mottville

for reservations or carry-out, call

269-483-2305

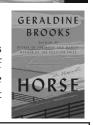
In Honor of Barbara Green

The Green family will be hosting a celebration of life open house in honor of Barbara Green on Sunday, August 31st from 2 to 5pm at their cottage on the south side. All are welcome to stop in and visit.



Book Club

We have ONE more meeting this summer: September 16th, *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks at Blair Garceau's. Any questions, or if you'd like to join in the fun, contact Jackie Frew: *seeitall8@gmail.com* or call/text 708-285-2999.





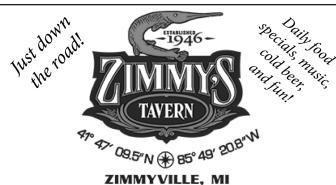
269-845-0074 15809 M60, Vandalia, MI 49095

Online booking barkandbubbles.groomore.com



Closed every other Monday & Saturday





69608 Sunset Blvd | Zimmyville (Union) Michigan

269-641-5317 zimmystavern.com

Carryout available

Tuesday through Sunday: Regular hours 11am to midnight Saturday and Sunday Breakfast, 9am to noon Closed Mondays

ODDS AND ENDS

From our Past Commodore, Julie Dickey:

Hello neighbors and friends. I have now joined the ranks of the BLYC Past Commodores. I received the official flag at the Fall Dinner. It is now displayed outside of our home.

I would like to express my sincere thanks for receiving all the kind words from many of you at the Fall Dinner. Thank you for the special card and gift. Big thanks for all the support given to me by the BLYC members and friends. I am left with a gracious heart. I plan to stay active at the BLYC.

Commodore Steve and his wife Jackie planned a wonderful Fall Dinner! There was an abundance of great food and the decorations were awesome. As I passed the torch to Steve, I know we are in good hands.

Congratulations to Ron Niezgodski, our new Vice Commodore! Ron has been volunteering his time in many ways for many years at the BLYC. Thanks Ron for accepting this new role.

Special Congrats to Amber Grundy for receiving the Commodore Award. It was well deserved! I was able to present the award to Amber on Saturday evening at her home.

We have many more warm and sunny days to enjoy. I will see you around our beautiful Birch Lake. We are truly blessed!

Gratefully. Julie Dickey

Photos the for Phipps. Hello Birch Lake family and friends. I am still putting together a photo album for Claudia and Dennis Phipps. I would like this photo album to



include as many of us as possible. When complete, I will send it to them. Several of you brought a picture to the party but I could use lots more. If you didn't bring one to the party, please take a second and send me a photo you already have in your phone, a selfie of yourself, couples, kids and or pets to be included. You can text your pics to me at 574-876-4981. I will see to it they are printed and included. Thanks ~Patti

FREE TREES! Did you know that planting trees and shrubs can improve the lake's water quality? A grant from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative has made it possible for Birch Lake residents to receive free trees to plant on their property. If you would like to receive free trees, you can request them by scanning the QR code below. Individual homeowners should request their own

trees, but if you have can 💥 questions, you contact Blair Garceau, BLYC homeowner's association.



FIREWORKS FUND

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



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.



VISIT YOUR LOCAL CULVER'S RESTAURANT:

Niles, MI Sturgis, MI Granger, IN

Three Rivers, MI Coldwater, MI Mishawaka, IN



2025 BIRCH BARKER SPONSOR

2026 BLYC OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

BLYC OFFICERS

Commodore

Steve Frew (E)708-285-2999 stephenbfrew@gmail.com
Vice Commodore Ron Niezgodski (W) 574-532-6710 birchbass1@gmail.com
Treasurer Deb Spratt (N)debspratt@comcast.net
Secretary Mike Sheffieck (W) 708-220-1506 mcsheffieck@gmail.com
Fleet Captain Bob Niezgodski (W) 574-532-6919 rjniezgodski@gmail.com
BLVC DIDECTORS

BLYC DIRECTORS
John Ball (E)
Dave Carroll (W)574-850-0465 carrolldavid39@gmail.com
Barb Cassady (E) 574-229-9815 barbcassady49@gmail.com
Ed Chester (E)269-476-1010 ed@chesterlawoffice.com
Tim Cole (H)



Liz Cover (E)
Sue Davis (E)
Julie Dickey (E) 574-220-9132 jdjuls@aol.com Past Commodore
Ronni Eshleman (S) 317-418-9557 rondaesh@gmail.com
Bernie Garceau (E)269-476-9862 bgarceau@norcoind.com
Blair Garceau (E) 269-476-9862 blairgarceau@gmail.com

Homeowner's Association Chair

Amber Grundy (E) 574-315-0227 amber.grundy@gmail.com birchbarker1@gmail.com
Deb Hall (C)
Vickie Rogers (C)269-476-2383 tvrogers@frontier.com
Rick Russwurm (N) 269-476-2407 paramountp@aol.com
Ray Scholes (S) 567-429-9569 rqs72@aol.com
Scott Troeger (E)269-476-9898 scott.troeger@btlaw.com
Phil Vitale (E)269-476-1680 sailorphil@philvitale.com
Sandy Vitale (E) 269-476-1680 sv6102@gmail.com
Dan Waxman (E)
Patrick Welch (S) 574-536-7344 patrick.welch2017@gmail.com Water Quality Committee Chair
Sue Williams (S) 269-476-8886

smwilliams226@gmail.com

Need an affordable Medicare plan that's in step with your life?

I can help!

Choosing the right Medicare coverage can be confusing.

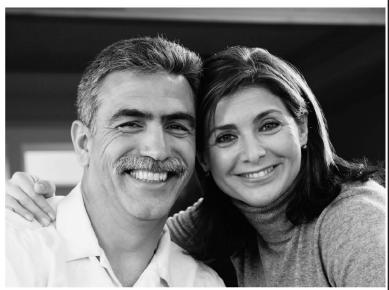
I can help you find a Medicare plan that's right for you and your budget.



Ashly Connaughton
Licensed Insurance Agent

(269) 312-1410

awelch@HealthMarkets.com HealthMarkets.com/awelch





health markets.

HealthMarkets Insurance Agency, Inc. is licensed as an insurance agency nationwide except in MA. Not all agents are licensed to sell all products. Service and product availability varies by state. Sales agents may be compensated based on enrollment. No obligation to enroll. ©2024 HealthMarkets

50124a-HM-0824

FALL DINNER























scan for more (& color) photos <-----

















WATER QUALITY REPORT: TIDBITS FROM THE MAILBAG

From: Elon M.

How do you keep Birch Lake so clean? Mandate electric boat motors? AI? What gives? I need to bottle it and make another billon.

The residents care, we're not afraid of putting in the hard work, and we make sure we do things right. You're welcome to visit but please leave your DOGE posse in Washington because we ain't cuttin' nothin'.



From: Sasquatch

People say I'm fake, but I see everything. Especially the efforts of the WQ Committee. Have you seen the lake lately (I know, you think I'm looking the other way)? It's incredibly clear and blue! Thanks to everyone who contributed to my beautiful backyard. And for those who didn't (and probably don't believe in Bigfoot) - you don't know Squatch. By the way, what did you like more - the hat or the lingerie I wore earlier this summer?

The hat, of course. This is a family newsletter.

From: Scottie S.

I have 18 career wins on the PGA tour. Plus, I make it look easy. What's the Water Quality Committee's secret to their success? Like you, we stay out of the weeds.

From: Donald T.

The Water Quality Committee at Birch – a very special group. The other lakes – dogs, losers, enemies of the people. I could do a deal for you – because that's what I do. I will build a great wall around the lake to stop any invasives from entering and will have Shavehead Lake pay for it. Mark my words. It would be very special.

Thank you. But we take care of ourselves.

From: Snoop D.

I want to thank the Birch Lake community for believing in the

From: Taylor S.

Congratulations! It hasn't been a "Cruel Summer" at Birch Lake, thanks to everyone's effort to keep the lake clean, beautiful and blue. Travis and I may stop by before too long to enjoy the vibes but he's got this football thing that always gets in the way. I told him to "Shake It Off," but just like that stubborn Milfoil, he just won't listen. Keep up the Swift action on all those invasives!

Love this, thank you. But, Go Bears!

From: Caitlin C.

The Fever may be slumping without me in the lineup, but it's

Appreciate you Caitlin! You and Angel may be archrivals but we're equal opportunity lakers. So, you're both welcome to donate at store.birchlakeyachtclub.com

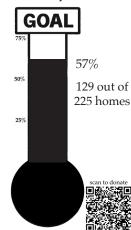
cause of water quality. And, I want to thank me for believing in me. I want to thank me for doing all this hard work. I want to thank me for just being me. Fo shizzle my nizzle!

Not sure what you just said, but thanks Doggy!

nothing like the WQ Fund would be without the lake community's support. I know, you'd probably rather watch me rain threes from half court than contribute to the fund, but what's more important: keeping the invasive plants out of Birch or me schooling Angel Reese? Keep

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

- Thou shalt prevent the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).
- Thou shalt minimize surface runoff.
- III. Thou shalt minimize the effects of waves.
- IV. Thou shalt protect and expand Natural Shorelines.
- 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.

From: Marcus F.

Just wanted to say hello from South Bend and say, "Donate Like a Champion Today" to the WQ Fund of Birch Lake. Hopefully, all my Domer alumni and friends have contributed. This year I'm offering two free season tickets on the 50-yard line to anyone who donates \$100 or more to the Fund (plus gives \$100,000 to our NIL fund and pay my assistant's salaries – hey, it's the Irish way!). So, donate now! Go

There's only one Coach and he lives on our south side. He doesn't ask. He gives.

From: Gretchen W.

I know it's been my mantra to "fix the damn roads!" in Michigan (except in Cass County, of course), but it's time to focus on our waters. Let me just say how wonderful your efforts have been to keep Birch Lake beautiful and clean. It represents "Pure Michigan."

Thanks for the shout out, Madam Gov. We'll do our best to keep Birch "invasive free". Now, about those chuckholes on Sears...

That's it from the Mailbag. Strong opinions from important people, none more than the community at Birch Lake.

Enjoy it. Respect it. Own it.

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.

...a little slice of heaven

FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER

A WINDY DAY OF SAILING!

This past Sunday turned out to be a great day for sailboat racing! For the first time this year, I was concerned that it could be too windy to sail. The forecasted wind was high with big gusts. The true wind at the time of sailing was not as high as forecasted, and it turned into a fast and fun day of sailing. Races were being completed in around 20 minutes, which is pretty fast. I personally had a lot of fun and have heard from a few sailors that they did too. Most importantly, everyone stayed safe.

The Labor Day Regatta is this upcoming weekend. Five races will be held over August 30^{th} and 3^{1s} t, with Monday, September 1^{st} , being a backup date. In calculating the standings, it appears that we may have some season standings being decided over these races. Can't list them all without burning up my calculator, but of note, in the MC class, Pat Welch and Bill Luecht are super close in the standings with a 0.5% difference between 2^{nd} and 3^{rd} place. We will have to wait and see who takes 2^{nd} !

As the sailing season is close to concluding, I want to thank all the sailors and the individuals who help support us sailors. It has been a fun - sometimes challenging first year as fleet captain. I appreciate all the memories and help. On one final note, the Sailing Awards will be on September 6th at 11:00 AM at our house on the west shore. Anyone who has sailed this year or helped support us sailors is encouraged to attend if you can. Also, anyone interested in sailing with us next year, please swing by and get to know the sailors!

~Fleet Captain Bob Niezgodski, rjniezgodski@gmail.com



Regatta this weekend!
Races start at 11am
Saturday and Sunday
Please steer clear
of the course!

BIRCH LAKE SAILING SCORES

MC Scow Standings

				8-			
	23-Aug	23-Aug	23-Aug	Total	% Races	Average	Season
	21	22	23	Points	Finished	Points	Rank
MC Scow / Sailor							
Scott Troeger #1489	1	1	1	31453	87	1572.7	1
Patrick Welch #1979	2	3	3	33473	100	1455.3	2
Bill Luecht #1579	DNS	DNS	DNS	24732	74	1454.8	3
Phil Vitale #500	DNS	DNS	DNS	25414	78	1411.9	4
Amber Grundy #1173	3	2	2	25203	78	1400.2	5
Bob King #1199	DNS	DNS	DNS	7080	22*	1416	
Steve Frew #676	DNS	DNS	DNS	6413	22*	1282.6	not enoug
Tom Eslinger #676	4	4	4	11191	35*	1243.4	qualify
Sandy Vitale #2159	DNS	DNS	DNS	14641	65*	1220.1	

Sunfish Standings

Sumon Standings							
	23-Aug	23-Aug	23-Aug	Total	% Races	Average	Season
	18	19	20	Points	Finished	Points	Rank
Sunfish Sailor							
Rick Russwurm	2	2	2	27722	85	1540.1	1
Stewart Spratt	1	1	1	25717	85	1512.8	2
Bob Niezgodski	4	4	3	27937	100	1396.9	3
Pete Soldato	DNS	DNS	DNS	5786	20*	1446.5	
Amy Troeger	DNS	DNS	DNS	7155	25*	1431.0	
Herb Cleveland	DNS	DNS	DNS	11272	35*	1409.0	
Jeff Walls	3	3	4	16882	60*	1407.7	not enough
Scott Sortal	DNS	DNS	DNS	8228	30*	1371.3	qualify
Bill Butler	DNS	DNS	DNS	1369	0*	1369.0	
Connor Caplis	DNS	DNS	DNS	3888	15*	1296.0	
Max Parnell	DNS	DNS	DNS	0	15*	0	





Best wind of the season!

Key and Scoring Information

DNS (Did Not Sail) does not count against season score, however *sailor must complete 2/3 of races to qualify for season*

DNF (Did Not Finish) or DSQ (Disqualified) scores as last place (if 5 boats started the race, you will be scored as 5th place).

DNF, DSQ are not counted toward minimum number of races needed

CB - sailor who serves on Committee Boat receives their season average place as of that date - counted toward season total.

Season Points are awarded on Square of 40 system (1st = 40 squared = 1600, 2nd = 39 squared, etc.)

Season Place = total season points/number of races attempted



CUSTOM SOLUTIONS & DESIGNS

alphagraphics



Istsource.com | Member FDIC

Straight Talk. Sound Advice.

Source Insurance

Insurance products and annuities are not insured by the FDIC; are not deposits or obligations of, or guaranteed by 1st Source Bank; and may involve investment risk, including loss of value. 1st Source Insurance, Inc. is a wholly control of the Source Insurance, Inc. is a wholly control of the Source Insurance.

CAMP T CORNER: GROWN UP CAMP

ard to believe it's the last Barker of the summer! We had a fun Land busy summer here at Camp, and I want to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who sent campers to camp, volunteered at camp, served on our board or a committee, or made a contribution this year! We are so grateful for the involvement of the lake community and everything Birch Lakers do to support Camp Fire and Camp Tannadoonah.

Thank you to Birch Lake residents Bob Bender, Tom Kuhn, Jamie Green, Tara Grove, Kara Nickell, Carrie O'Brien, and Patrick Welch who currently who serve on our Board of Directors. And to Mike Sheffieck and Kim VanHuffel who serve on committees.

Thank you to Maggie Laneman (McGann, formerly east side), Mia Bishop (Como, south), Becky (Davis) Anderson (cove), Hallie Minglin (formerly west side), Kat Snider (Rogers, cove), Brendan Snider (cove), and Avery Grundy (east) who were all part of our Camp staff this summer. Thank you to Tom Eslinger (cove) for helping teach sailing to our Advanced Sailors. And to my parents, Bill and Sherry Holleman, who volunteered at camp the entire summer, helping drive the waterskiing boat, helping with my kids, helping with maintenance, and so much more.

My parents were awarded a brick under our Legend Tree at camp this year. They were nominated by our facilities

manager, Brenda, and the award was voted on by the Board of Directors. The Legend Tree recognizes individuals who have given extraordinary time, talen, and treasure to Camp Fire and Camp T over the years. For the past 15 years, my parents have volunteered countless hours every summer at camp. They help with everything imaginable, and they do it with a smile. We are so grateful for their dedication to Camp.

We had campers from families all around the lake! From the cove: the Snider, Rollings (Bergan), Anderson (Davis), Condle (Davis), and Hinkle families. From the east side: Margolis (Waxman), Noneman (Dufour), Mikulak, Schlemmer (Garceau), and Vitale-Richards families. From the hill: the Meneghin and Schnoor (Pence) families. From the west side: the Cowen, Hoban (Carroll), and Evans (Carroll) families. From the south side: the Custard, Iams (Troeger), Krizman (Hendricks), Henry (Waters), Morales, Scholes, and Richardson (Como) families. From the north side: the Gableman (Phipps), Marlow (Phipps), Magro, Magro Algarotti, and Ruppersburg (Kenagy) families. And, of course, the Grundy kids!

Thank you to everyone who came out for our Pancake Breakfast this summer, and all those who helped make that event successful. We had so many awesome volunteers for the Pancake Breakfast and served over 400 people. And to everyone



www.tannadoonah.org

who has contributed their time, services, supplies, and funds to camp, this year and in the past. There are too many to list, but I'd like to give a special thanks to Tom Mosier for his frequent (and often last-minute) help with facilities!

One last very important thank you to Dan and Sharon Waxman, and all of Dan's siblings, who are donating an AED to Camp. We are very grateful for their generosity! It will make all of our campers and visitors safer to have an AED accessible on the property. And thank you to Kyle Bernaciak, who is coordinating the purchase of the AED, and installing it for us when it arrives.

We love all the support we receive from the Birch Lake Community! Thank you all!

~Miss Amber





11923 M-60

269.244.5510

www.satorisalonandspa.com email: satorisalonspa@gmail.com

Offering our Guests...

- All hair services with natural products
- Massages / Facials
- Hydrafacial MD Treatment
- Eyelash lift & tint / Brow lamination
- Pedicures / Manicures
- Waxing / Sugaring
- Hair Extensions
- Spa Treatments

Experience the Organic Difference!



Tri-County Bookkeepers & CPAs

tax accounting & payroll services since 1955

2525 Lake Pine Dr, Suite A - St Joseph, MI 49085

An accounting practice serving southwestern Michigan for over 60 years, specializing in small business accounting

We offer a free, no-obligation discussion about your business requirements, competitive pricing, personal account manager, corporate and personal tax prep, tax planning, tax representation, full-service payroll, affordable timekeeping solutions, financial analysis, and pay-as-you-go Worker's Comp Insurance.

Tax Planning

Need assistance with your tax planning? Don't we all! We can help you plan for your taxes before your business is even off the ground.

Bookkeeping / Financial Statement Compilation

Depending on your needs, we can do your bookkeeping for you, or we can teach you how to accurately keep records.

Company Structure

Let us help you decide what the best organization is for you.

Federal and State Forms

We'll help you apply for all the tax IDs and forms you need.

Tri-County Bookkeepers and CPAs 2525 Lake Pine Dr., Suite A Saint Joseph, MI 49085

269-926-2191

BIRCH LAKE HISTORY: PARNELL / NIEZGODSKI FAMILY

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

orothy Morgridge was born in Cassopolis in February 1913, the second daughter of William F. and Carrie Morgridge. She had an older sister, Louise, born c. 1907. The family moved to Niles in 1914, where William

- a mechanical engineer - worked as a construction superintendent for National Boiler Washing, Co. He then became a plant manager for Clark Equipment, Co, where he worked for 31 years, until his retirment in 1947. He also served as mayor of Niles from 1939 to 1946.



William F. Morgridge

Dorothy studied music at the University of Colorado, and then graduated from Western Michigan College. Her parents were both originally from Colorado, and had both attended St. Gertrude Academy in Boulder, CO. After graduating from Western Michigan, Dorothy taught in the music department for Kalamazoo Public Schools, and then was a member of the faculty of Western Michigan College as the supervisor of

In 1942, Dorothy married John G. Parnell, originally from Hoopeston, IL. He graduated with an engineering degree from the University of Illinois, and then moved to Niles, where he was the Superintendent of the Niles Board of Public Works. He later became the owner and operator of Gay Hose, Co. in Niles.

music in the Paw Paw Training School.

Dorothy and John had four children, Jeanne (b. 1943), John Jr. (b. 1945), Dick (b. 1948), and Kathy (b. 1954). Around 1965 they purchased the house at the end of Birch Lakeview Drive on the west side from Mildred (Doane) Binkley Curtis. Dorothy remembered playing at that property as a child. The original house in the 1920s was farther back from the lake, and the road was in front of the house. The current house was built in approximately 1952 for the Binkley-Curtis family, who at one time owned most of the land in the cove.



The Parnell family: Dick and John, Jr. Dorothy, granddaughter Kimmy, Jeanne, John, Sr., and Kathy



Looking north from the Parnell's property

Kathy recalls playing in the lake, digging up mud from the bottom and making sculptures on the dock. Her mother, Dorothy was interested in many different pursuits, and taught the children

about birds, flowers, rocks, and all the critters around the lake. She was also very interested in geneology and traced their family's roots back to the 1400s!

The Parnells were good friends with Jack and Buddy Asire, Lloyd and Lorene Krueger, Clat and Tilly McCoy, and Betty and Neil Onofryton - other

families on the west side who were also from Niles. Jack Asire was a pilot, and they traveled with the Asires to Europe, where he knew "all the back ways and places to go."

In 1974, Kathy married Ron Niezgodski, They met while camping at Warren Dunes on Lake Michigan. They were only 20 when they married, and they traveled to Fort Lauderdale for their honeymoon, only to find they weren't old enough to rent a car! John and Dorothy's friends who lived in Florida came to the rescue and rented a car for them. They visited Islamorada, where Kathy's sisterin-law's father was a park ranger.



Kathy and Ron Niezgodski's Wedding with their parents, the John and Dorothy Parnell and Jean and Alex Niezgodski

Ron's grandfather founded Niezgodski plumbing in South Bend in 1922, and Ron worked for the family business, eventually taking over the company after his father's retirement in 1991.

The six Parnell grandchildren loved visiting the lake as kids. Jeanne had



The Parnell - Niezgodski Home



The Parnell family at John and Dorothy 50th wedding anniversary at the lake

one daughter, Kim, John Jr. had two daughters, Ashley and Laura, and Dick had twin sons, Shane and Brian. Kathy and Ron have one son, Bobby. In 1992, the whole family came together at the lake to celebrate John and Dorothy's 50th anniversary. In 1999, there was another family gathering at the lake to celebrate Ron and Kathy's 25th anniversary.



Ron and Kathy Niezgodski's 25th Anniversary Luau with Friends and Family

Ron and Kathy inherited the Birch Lake house when Dorothy passed in 2008. They moved to the lake full time in 2013 after Ron's retirement. The whole family is active in the lake community. Ron and Kathy ran the Spaghetti Dinner for five years and Ron has served on the BLYC for 3 years and the Water Quality committee for five years. He has helped with the opening and closing of the Yacht Club each year for many years, and handles all of the plumbing issues that arise. Ron coordinates the distribution of the Birch Barker, and installed the Birch Barker delivery tubes on mailboxes around the lake. In 2024, the Niezgodskis were the Grand Marshals for the annual Boat Parade. Bobby is the current fleet captain, and just last weekend, Ron was named as the next Vice Commodore for the BLYC!

~Kathy (Parnell), Ron, and Bob Niezgodski contributed the information and photos for this story.



Grand Marshals for the 2024 Boat Parade



Kathy, swimming with her three dogs. She called them her "alligators" because they would follow her swimming in a line.



Thinking about selling your lake home or property?

The Dennis Bamber Group

has sold over 175 waterfront properties in the past few years valued at over \$70,000,000.

Our Exceptional Marketing

for lake property is creative, dynamic, and brings results.

We Know How to List, Market, and Sell



Here are some things for you to consider:

- Lake inventory is at an all time low and prices are higher.
- There are more buyers than sellers.
- Many lake property buyers are cash buyers.
- Interest rates have leveled off and may come down more.



Visit our website:

mymichiganlakehouse.com exclusively to waterfront





THE DENNIS BAMBER GROUP

LAKE & WATERFRONT SPECIALISTS

574-532-3808

dennisbamber@cressyeverett.com

*Not intended to solicit any properties already listed for sale with another real estate agent.

BARKER KIDS OF THE WEEK



Abby Anderson (hill), Claire Noneman (east), and Elyse Grundy (east) making the most of the last few weekends of summer break!





Elyse Grundy and friend Caylin tubing. They got in a few laps before the rain started!

Remington (west shore) kids and friends out tubing



Marlee and Jonah Soldato spending their last few hours at grandma and grandpa'before heading home to start school this week

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



Joey Wodark (6 years old, south shore) caught his first fish!

A great group of Birch Lake friends enjoyed the last Cass County COA concert of the summer series - The Whistle Pigs - on Friday, August 22nd.







Your property. Our priority.

Premium residential property maintenance



Whether you're a busy homeowner, a frequent traveler, or managing multiple properties, Cressy Concierge gives you peace of mind. From routine maintenance and to seasonal preparation, we're your one-stop solution for worry-free living.

SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Preventative Maintenance and Home Repairs
- Property Visits While You're Away
- HVAC Installation, Maintenance, and Repairs
- Vendor Coordination and Oversight
- Landscape and Grounds Management
- Seasonal Home Preparation

- Smart Home Technology Assistance and Checks
- Event Set-up and Tear-Down
- Personal Shopping, Concierge, and Specialized Services
- Have a need we didn't list? Let's chat.









We've got your home covered.

Enjoy the lake and leave the details to us.

- Call Shannon Marrs, Concierge Manager at 574-227-1040 or for additional questions, call Rick Doolittle at 574-286-0971
- Email info@cressy.com
- Website: www.cressyconcierge.com
- f Check us out on Facebook
- in Check us out on LinkedIn

A Division of





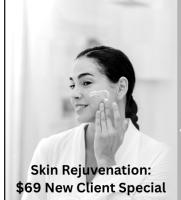
Mowing
Hedges
Edging
Gutter Cleaning
Spring, Summer,
and Fall Cleanup
Rock / Mulch Installation
BRET TIETSORT

269-580-2738

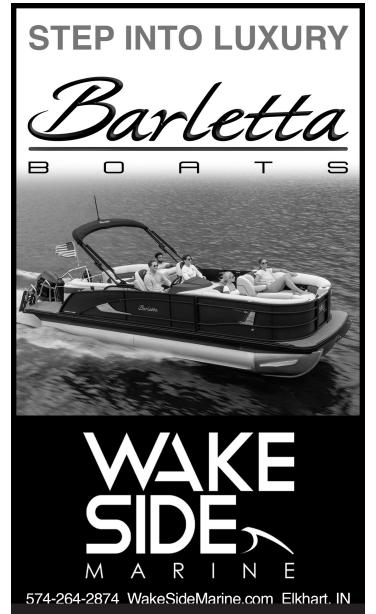




605 E University Dr Granger, IN 46530 574-521-1355 dermanimedspa.com/granger



Botox® Membership \$45/mo





Barge Services

Dock Removal / Install

Dock / Hoist Sales

61272 Dailey Rd Cassopolis, MI 49031 269-591-9848

primepropertycarellc@yahoo.com

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

REDUCED PRICE: \$7.000

24' Pontoon Boat. Great Condition Power Bimini. Custom Flooring. Individual Custom Seat Covers. Bluetooth Radio. 40HP Motor. Contact: Gerry Temple, North Shore at (847) 767-0037.



Countertop Ice Maker

Whynter Upright Ice Maker Model IMC-491DC, 2.1 qt. Built In, Compressor LCD, Digital Display. No Pre-freezing, Stainless Steel, 4 Touch Control - Off/On, Select, Timer, Clean.

Reviews for this unit can be found on Amazon. Also a video of operation can be found on YouTube. \$75.00 or best offer. Call (269) 476-2383 - The Rogers

Washer & Dryer Pair

Top-loading washer and electric dryer. Older but in good working condition. I upgraded to a larger front-loading set. \$100 for the pair. Amber at (574) 315-0227 or email amber.grundy@gmail.com.

WANTED

Photos of Birch Lake Sailors. Looking for photos of BLYC sailors from the 60s to create a Wall of Fame at the Yacht Club around the trophy shelf. Send photos or questions to Deb Hall at

debbershall@gmail.com

LOST

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

FOUND

We found a plastic cover plate to a Yamaha Jetski on Friday, August 8 floating in front of our West side house. Please contact Mike Sheffieck at (708) 220-1506 if it's yours.



Found turtle raft on west side last week after a windy day. Call Sue Davis (574) 883-6031.



SERVICES

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

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

LAKE LOVERS' DREAM SWAP

weekend's Barker.

Birch Lake for Tahoe

Hi, my name is Laura (Toth) Koval. I grew up spending summers at Birch Lake and would love to return with my family. Looking to trade a week at Lake Tahoe, for a week at Birch Lake.

Our spacious Tahoe cabin sleeps 12 guests and is available year-round — summer sunshine, winter snow, or anything in between.

We're looking for a Birch Lake home that sleeps at least 8 for summer 2026, ideally the week of July 4th (or nearby dates).

Our Tahoe home offers easy access to hiking, beaches, and winter skiing at Heavenly Mountain. If you have ever wanted to visit Lake Tahoe this is a great opportunity!

Please email me at *laura.toth1@gmail. com* and I can share more information and photos of our Tahoe home. Thank you!



269.445.1818





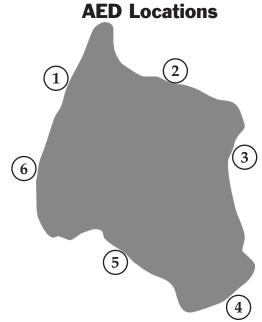
EMERGENCY HEART DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) locations on Birch Lake

There are six (6) automated external defribrillator 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:** De Young Home 63255 Storey Hill Street

All units are on the **ROAD SIDE** of the property and accessible by vehicle or on foot.

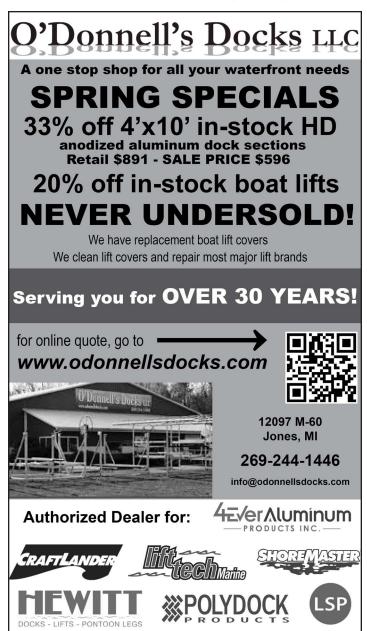


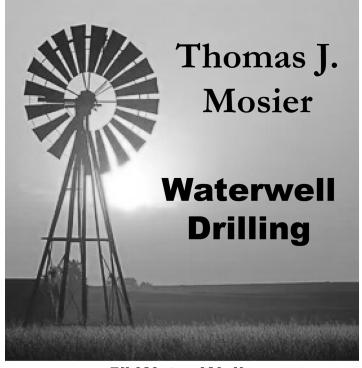


IN AN EMERGENCY

- 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.

This message is brought to you by the Birch Lake Homeowners Association.





5" Water Wells

Repair and Service Most Water Pumps

M-60 E, Cassopolis

Office: 269-445-3246 Cell: 269-580-3246



- Landscape Maintenance
- Tree & Shrub Pruning
- Leaf & Weed Removal
- Gutter, Roof, & Siding Cleaning
- Window Washing
- Patio & Retaining Wall Repair
- General Exterior Maintenance

CALL or TEXT 269-303-3893

Lake References Available

On site shrink wrapping

SUNSET SHRINK WRAPPING

574-536-8330



Last one of the summer!

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 -->







INFÍMITY

HOME SERVICES LLC

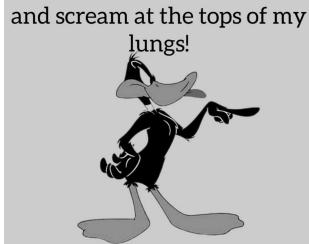
- home watch
 property checks
 maintenance
 - repairs
 small projects
 - short-term vacation rental maintenance services
 269-259-1127 | jim@infinitymichiana.com

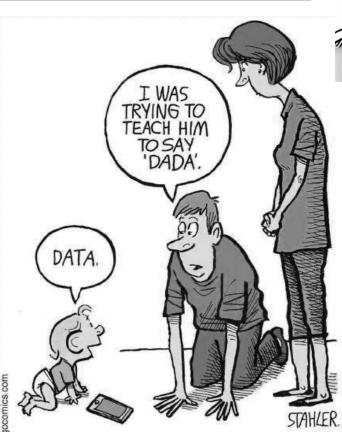
infinitymichiana.com

BARKER FUNNIES



I just found out what the purpose of toes are.
To find furniture in the dark, and scream at the tops of my lungs!





My ducks are absolutely not in a row. I don't even know where some of them are... And I'm pretty sure one of them is a pigeon







O: 269.244.8020 | C: 269.506.3276

PROTECT YOUR PORCH WITH

Sunbrella Poll Curtains







CUSTOM CANVAS COVERINGS



Sunbrella roll curtains outdoor furniture covers boat covers pontoon covers



12291 BIDELMAN RD. | THREE RIVERS, MI 49093



YOUR ONE CALL SOLUTION TO MEET YOUR HOME'S YEARLY MAINTENANCE, SAFETY, AND COMFORT NEEDS.

Tired of doing home maintenance, no time to do it, or just lacking the skills to do it?

Let our certified crews *do it all for you*.

To schedule a home visit and discuss your options, call Jim at 574-381-0410, or email jim@bastionhomemaintenance.com

Want to know more about our services? Please visit our website at **BastionHomeMaintenance.com**

Jim Gills
Director of Sales
574-381-0410
jim@bastionhomemaintenance.com



BIRCH LAKE YACHT CLUB DUES

Support the BLYC and the entire Birch Lake Community by becoming a member!

The Birch Lake Yacht Club (BLYC) is a 501(c)(7) non profit organization

What your BLYC dues and donations support:

- 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 Defribillators (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.

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$	BLYC member dues (\$50 per year) Associate member dues (\$10 per year) (non lake residents) Water Quality donations Fireworks fund Homeowners Association (\$10 per year) Sailing Fees (\$15 per year)	Make checks payable to: BLYC and mail to: Deb Spratt, Treasurer 18100 Farmington Hills Dr South Bend, IN 46637
\$	Other Donations (please specify:)	or pay online at store.birchlakeyachtclub.com
\$ 	TOTAL CONTRIBUTION	
Name _ Lake Ad	dress	













APOLLOMARINE.net

We rent Pontoon Boats!

We service all area lakes!



South side of Gravel Lake 15355 96th Avenue Lawton, MI 49065

269-423-6011 1-888-996-BOAT

SALES • SERVICE • STORAGE





Get a FREE market analysis! Contact Paul DeLano:

269-445-8877 paul@thelakelife.com

LISTINGS NEEDED!

NOW IS A GREAT TIME TO LIST YOUR HOME!

Birch Lake homes are

SELLING!

CALL PAUL DELANO

TODAY

269-445-8877

paul@thelakelife.com