

BIRCH

vol. 78 issue 6

Barker

Weekend of
June 27
2026

The official publication of the Birch Lake Yacht Club

BirchLakeYachtClub.com

- No matter your speed, power boats must travel **COUNTER CLOCKWISE**.
- Go slow near other boats, rafts, and the shore. You are responsible for your wake.
- Stay 100ft from shore, other boats, and rafts when you are traveling over wake speed.
- When pulling a skier, wakeboarder, wakesurfer, or tuber, you **MUST** have an observer at all times.
- There must be US Coast Guard approved life vests for every person on board, as well as one throwable device (e.g., seat cushion).
- All children 5 and younger **MUST be in a USCG Type 2** life jacket (PFD) when aboard any boat. Many common life vests are NOT Type 2 PFDs. Check the label!
- All boats must have a horn, fire extinguisher, and valid registration on board.
- Jet skis have many special rules. It is your responsibility to know and obey the laws!



BIRCH LAKE

Boating safety guidelines brought to you by the Birch Lake Homeowners Association

2026 BIRCH LAKE CALENDAR

June

27 - BLYC Board Meeting, 9am
27 - Kidz Regatta, noon-3pm

July

3 - Port-a-Pit Fundraiser
4 - Boat Parade, 3pm
4 - Fireworks
4 - 5 - Fourth of July Regatta
5 - Pancake Breakfast, 8:30-11am
15 - Card / Game Night, 6:30pm
24 - Ladies Golf Outing

August

1 - BLYC Board Meeting
1 - Homeowner's Assoc., 10am
1 - Corn and Sausage Roast
19 - Card / Game Night
22 - BLYC Board Meeting, 9am
22 - Fall Dinner
26 - Women's Style Show

September

5 - 6 - Labor Day Regatta

2026 BLYC Directors

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

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Water Quality:
Patrick Welch (S)
Homeowners Association:
Blair Garceau (E)

COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

It was good to golf this week with the Birch Lake men at Pine View. Bryan Caenepeel, son of Marc and Lynn Caenepeel, played and was a standout. Please see the photo in the Kids of the Week section of this Barker. Come back anytime, Bryan.

There's only one more week until the Fourth of July, and your last chance to place your Port-A-Pit orders is Friday, June 26. Better order now before you forget.

Last chance also for Fireworks donations to this year's show. A big THANK YOU to all who have donated! It's not too late to get your contribution in for this special 250th event!

On Saturday, June 27, come support youth sailing on Birch Lake at the Kidz Regatta, hosted by Tom and Megan Caplis on the North Shore.

250 Years Ago This Week:

Did you know that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence on a laptop? Lap desks, also called portable writing desks, writing boxes, or writing slopes, date back to the early 1600's. But Jefferson wanted one of his own design, with storage and a lock. Apparently anticipating the writing assignment, he had it

built by Philadelphia cabinetmaker Benjamin Randolph in early 1776. Jefferson also designed a revolving book shelf for easy access to source materials while he wrote.

On June 11, the 33-year old Jefferson started writing in a rented room in Philadelphia. He wrote for 17 days, using window light by day, candles by night, goose-feather quill pens dipped in iron gall ink, and his lap desk. Today, we would consider those conditions primitive. But the great minds who joined together in creating the Declaration of Independence introduced new concepts to the world: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

The Declaration of Independence affirms that governments derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed" and that the people may "alter or to abolish" destructive ones. It concludes with an unforgettable pledge of unity: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor."

Thomas Jefferson used his lap desk for the rest of his working life, giving it to a granddaughter in 1825. Under the writing board, a note was found: "Politics as well as Religion has its superstitions. These, gaining strength with time, may, one day, give imaginary value to this relic, for its continued..."



The 2026 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 Holleman 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.

NEW DEADLINE for submissions is **11AM** on the **MONDAY** of the week before publication.

EVENTS

great association with the birth of the Great Charter of our Independence."

On July 4, 1826, exactly 50 years after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, signatory and Second U.S. President John Adams passed away shortly after saying "Thomas Jefferson still survives." But Adams was unaware that Thomas Jefferson had passed away a few hours earlier, that very same day.

~ Commodore Steve Frew



Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.
Declaration of Independence Desk, 1776



June 27, 2026

Lunch at noon, Sailing at 1pm, Popsicle Party after sailing. Meet at the Caplis home, 14901 Birch North Shore Drive, on the north side of the lake. Bring your sailboat and / or your kids! BLYC Sailors will give kids rides.

Everyone must bring and wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD / Life Jacket). If anyone has questions, feel free to contact me at rniezgodski@gmail.com, or look me up in the directory and give me a call.

Reservations optional - call or text 574-532-6919.

Spaghetti Dinner Recap

Residents, families, and friends gathered on Saturday, June 13 th for Birch Lake’s Spaghetti Dinner, enjoying an evening filled with delicious food, fellowship, and community spirit. More than 98 guests attended the event, where they were treated to a hearty meal of spaghetti, salad, bread, and dessert. The dining room was filled with conversation and laughter as attendees shared stories and enjoyed spending time together.

The event was made possible through the hard work of dedicated volunteers who helped prepare, serve, and clean up throughout the evening. Special thanks go to Mike and Julie Sheffiek, Stu Spratt, Dennis Geik, Ron, Kathy and Ron Niezgodski, Bob Niezgodski, Cam and Bill Butler, Tom Cassady, Ronnie Eshleman, Dave and Terry Carroll, Dave and Donna Hogoboom, Jennifer Ball, Jackie and Steve Frew, Dan Waxman, Stacia Andriano, and Karen Brovold, for their outstanding efforts in making the dinner a success.

The event raised approximately \$980.00 to support the Birch Lake Yacht Club General Fund. The generosity of those who attended and contributed will help strengthen future programs and activities for our community. Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, donated, and supported this year's Spaghetti Dinner. Your participation helped create a memorable evening, and we look forward to seeing everyone again at future Birch Lake Events.

With Appreciation,
Co-Chairs: Peggy Geik and Deb Spratt

Ladies Weekly Golf

This year we tee off on Thursday 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).

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	RIBS	\$11.00
	POTATOES	\$4.00



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on Friday, July 3, 2026, between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM.

SCAN TO PLACE YOUR ORDER!



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<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/nelsons-port-a-pit-fundraiser>

★ Please note that this is a preorder-only event, so be sure to secure your meal in advance! Deadline to place orders is June 26. ★

BIRCH LAKE NEWS

Safety Reminder

Saturday afternoon a needlessly dangerous situation occurred which prompts comment (especially with the Holiday weekend approaching). I was on plane in the traffic lane with two other boats ahead. To my surprise, a bass boat ducked in to the lane and ... we were head-to-head (estimated closure 35 mph). After taking evasive action I stood and gestured, desiring to speak to the driver. Crossing the counter-clockwise pattern is one thing ... driving at oncoming traffic, then passing Starboard to Starboard is another. Let's be careful out there.

~Bob King

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

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

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.

CONGRATULATIONS! Leslie and Bob King (North shore) are pleased to announce the birth of Eliana Mary King, born to Liz and Cal King (MN) on May 20th. We hope to make personal introductions over the Holiday weekend.



THANK YOU to all of our 2026 Barker advertisers! Please check them all out on the BLYC website and support our advertisers. The Birch Barker is delivered **free** to all Birch Lake residents because the advertising revenue covers all of the printing costs, website hosting, and our new membership platform. Publication and distribution is all managed by volunteers.

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.



Our goal for 2026 is \$26,000
Contribute now at
<https://tinyurl.com/BLYCfireworks>



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.



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WATER QUALITY: VOICES FROM THE LAKE

This year, the Water Quality Committee has asked some long-time residents of the lake for their perspective of Birch Lake and the importance of its water quality. The series of articles called, *"Voices From The Lake"*, represent unique viewpoints. This week's article was submitted to the WQC by Marty Asire. Thank you to all of our authors for contributing. We hope you enjoy their "Voices". ~Your Water Quality Committee

The 4th of July at Birch Lake is always memorable although you will have to forgive me for not remembering my first 4th. I was only two months old. I have a long memory, but it fails me on that one. I have never missed a 4th at the lake and no, I won't divulge how many years it has been. Spending the holiday and summer at the lake was simply something our family did, no matter how young the children or where we lived. From Kansas, to Africa, New York, and now Virginia, we travel like lemmings to the lake each summer.

Those long-ago 4ths were quieter as there were fewer cottages and much smaller boats. Fireworks consisted of sparklers that all the parents bought so we could write our names in the dark sky. One year, my mother, not wanting to waste a teachable moment, asked me to practice my cursive handwriting. My cursive still isn't what she would have liked it to be.

Speedboats had 10 horse motors that were surprisingly good at pulling young skiers out of the water for a zip around the lake. Fishermen used rowboats with the oars in the water instead of trolling motors. Despite it being a major holiday, the lake was quiet and the water crystal clear. It was sheer delight to swim out to the raft and look down into the depths at the fish swimming through the nearby weeds. We never minded the weed beds as there were treasures to be discovered in them. There was a feeling that we were part of nature; visitors who the lake allowed to come enjoy for a few magical months each year.

The 4th of July celebrations have grown and changed to now include the Pancake Breakfast, Boat Parade and fireworks. But much remains the same; we gather with friends and family to celebrate not only our country's independence, but the very lake we live on. May we continue to enjoy and protect our lake not only for ourselves but for the generations of lakers to come.

~Marty Asire (W325)

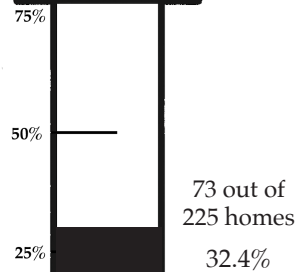
Birch Lake Yacht Club WATER QUALITY FUND

**Our goal for 2026 is to have 75%
of homes on the lake contribute.**

Contribute now at

<https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com>

GOAL



scan to donate



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.

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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 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.

NEW in 2026!

We are excited to introduce a new membership platform this year for BLYC memberships! This platform – called JoinIt – allows us to take online membership payments, collect donations, and take payments for events like the Spring or Fall Dinner. JoinIt also gives us an online directory that is only accessible to current BLYC members. It's entirely up to you what information you want to put into the directory to be shared with other BLYC members.



Scan here to go to
Join It

When you get to the JoinIt page, **make sure to click the blue “JOIN” button under the membership type you’re interested in.** Don’t click log in at the top right of the page, because you won’t be in the system if you haven’t joined yet.

You can also make donations to the BLYC online. We are using a platform for donations called Zeffy that allows nonprofits to accept payments with no fees, but they automatically select a donation to Zeffy on the checkout screen. If you choose to pay online with the QR code, **you can avoid paying any credit card fees by choosing "other" from the dropdown menu and entering \$0 in the box.**

You can also mail in a paper form:

Membership Fees

\$

BLYC member dues (\$50 per year)

\$

Associate member dues (\$15 per year) (non lake residents)

\$

Homeowners Association (\$10 per year)

\$

Sailing Fees (\$15 per year)

\$

Water Quality donations

Donations

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General Fund

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AED Fund

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Barker Donations

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Building Fund

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Fireworks Fund

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Safety Fund

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Water Quality / Milfoil Program

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Other Donations (please specify:)

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TOTAL CONTRIBUTION

Make checks payable to:
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BLYC 66TH ANNUAL MEN'S GOLF OUTING

FOUR MAN FLORIDA SCRAMBLE

Friday, July 31, 2026

Shotgun Start at **NOON**

Meadow Valley Country Club
57600 SR 13
Middlebury, IN 46530

Dinner and awards to follow
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 24

2026 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
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*Individual registrations available.
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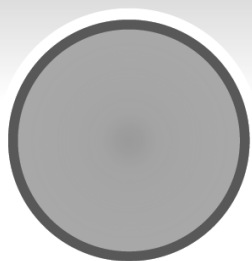
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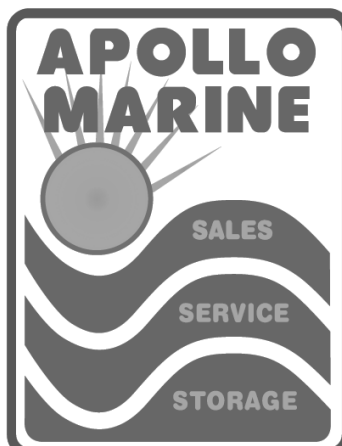
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LAST CALL FOR DIRECTORY UPDATES!

Every two years, we publish a new Birch Lake Directory. In 2026, BLYC members will also have access to the online directory through Join It, our new online member portal.

If you would like to update the information that is published in the printed directory, you can submit the new information by scanning the QR code (this is the preferred method to update!).



or by mailing the printed form to:
Amber Holleman
63250 Birch Rd
Vandalia, MI 49095

Please indicate on the form which information you consent to being shared in the printed and online directories.
IMPORTANT NOTE: The JoinIt online directory is ONLY available to current, paid, BLYC members.

If you do not submit an update by **June 30, 2026**, the printed directory will contain the same information that was in the 2024 printed directory. The online directory will contain ONLY name, lake address, and cottage number.

If you have questions about the directory or the information to be shared, please email birchbarker1@gmail.com

BLYC 2026 Directory Update

Cottage number: _____ Lake Address: _____

Last name(s): _____

First name(s): _____

Off lake address (if applicable): _____

Phone #1 _____ Name for this phone # _____

Phone #2 _____ Name for this phone # _____

Email address(es) _____

Children's names: _____

Consent to Share Information in the Directory

	Printed Directory	Online Directory
You may share ALL of the information above	☐	☐
You may share NONE of the information except name, lake address, and cottage number	☐	☐
You may share my / our phone number(s)	☐	☐
You may share my / our email address(es)	☐	☐
You may share my / our off-lake address	☐	☐
You may share my / our children's names	☐	☐



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FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Looks like Saturdays have been great for sailing so far this year, but not so much Sundays. It was another Sunday morning with little to no wind. The good news is that the Don Harman Kidz Regatta is this Saturday, Lunch at Noon, Sailing at 1 PM, so I hope the Saturday trend persists at least for one more weekend. The advanced forecast is for 6 to 7 MPH winds, which would be great.

Don Harman Kidz Regatta - next Saturday, June 27th

As mentioned, the 2026 Don Harman Kidz Regatta is this Saturday, June 27th! Tom and Megan Caplis offered to host it again this year, so it will be at the same place as last year's. Thanks again to Tom and Megan. Their house is located on the North Shore next to the King's House. Look for the homemade Kidz Regatta Signs at the end of their pier. It should be out a day or two before the event. Also, look for where all the sailboats go on the day of the event. If the wind is good, the sailors will take the kids out in their sailboats to experience a sailboat race and teach them a little about sailing. If the wind is light, the event will go on. It will still be a great opportunity for the kids to meet other kids they may not know around the lake and make new friends.

A General Timeline

Arrive around Noon at the Caplis home, 14901 Birch North Shore Drive. You're welcome to walk, bike, sail, or drive over. Kids who know how to sail are welcome to sail a boat over to race on their own or with a family member or friend. There will be a mooring line to tie your boat up to. If you need help tying off your boat, a sailor will help. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served. If the wind is good, around 1 PM, the sailors will pair up with the kids and take them out for a few races. If not, we will let the kids loose to play out in the yards and have fun together. The only rules are that everyone sailing 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, feel free to contact me at rjniezgodski@gmail.com, or look me up in the directory and give me a call.

~ Fleet Captain Bob Niezgodski

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CAMP T CORNER: DAY CAMP

Our Day Camp program at Camp T has become an increasingly important way for children to experience the magic of camp. Over the past two summers, the Day Camp program has expanded tremendously thanks to grants from the State of Michigan. These grants have allowed us to remove many of the barriers that prevent families from participating in camp. Through the funding, we are able to provide scholarships for children who participate in our before and after school programs in Edwardsburg and Cassopolis. The grants also make it possible for us to offer free transportation to and from camp for up to 13 campers each week.

Just a few years ago, our Day Camp program typically served around 25 campers per week. Over the past two summers, those numbers have doubled. Many of our day campers attend for multiple weeks, and some spend the entire summer with us. Watching campers build friendships, develop new skills, and gain confidence week after week has been incredibly rewarding for our staff.

One of the things that makes Camp T's Day Camp program unique is that we do not separate our day campers from our overnight campers. Rather than creating a separate program, day campers are fully integrated into camp life. They participate in the same activities, share meals together at breakfast and lunch,

sing songs, make friends, and become part of the camp community. The only real difference is that day campers head home before dinner while overnight campers stay for the evening activities and spend the night in their cabins.

We also offer a longer day than most day camps: campers can be dropped off as early as 7:30am and can stay as late as 6pm each day. On Friday evening, day campers are invited to stay for dinner and our Closing Campfire.

Whenever space allows, we take that experience one step further by assigning day campers to cabins alongside overnight campers. This gives them an even greater sense of belonging and allows them to feel like full members of the camp community.

For many families, Day Camp serves as an introduction to overnight camp. We are often able to offer day campers the opportunity to spend one night at camp during the week, giving them a chance to try the overnight experience in a supportive and familiar environment.



Meet Miss Mich! This year - for the first time - we have a dedicated Day



Camp Coordinator. During the school year, Miss Mich teaches primary students (ages 3 and 4) at Good Shepherd Montessori School in South Bend. She also runs our after school program at the school AND serves as a swim instructor for Irish Aquatics.

Miss Mich's connection to Camp T began in 2019 when she joined the staff as a cabin counselor. She returned in 2020 before taking a few years away from camp. In 2024, she came back to Camp T and served as our Kitchen Manager. At the end of the summer we hired her to work in one of our school-year programs. Her experience working with children, both at camp and in the classroom, makes her a perfect fit to lead our growing Day Camp program.

As participation continues to grow, we are excited to welcome more children to Camp T each summer and provide them with the opportunity to experience friendship, adventure, and belonging on a hill above a lake among the trees.

~Miss Amber

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BIRCH LAKE HISTORY: THE HARLANS

On a summer evening at Birch Lake, it was common to see Bruce Harlan out in his sailboat. Bruce and his wife, Juanita Jean, known as "JJ," were longtime summer residents at Birch Lake. While Bruce's career centered on photography, many of his favorite activities involved spending time on the water.

Bruce and JJ's son, Bob, recalls that they purchased their cottage at the lake around 1968 or 1969, when he was about 9 years old. Like many families they would come to lake for the summer as soon as school got out, and Bruce would commute back and forth to South Bend while JJ stayed at the lake with their kids, Bob and Linda.



Bruce and JJ with Tom and Julie Lacy

Bob describes JJ as the matriarch of the family, saying that she's the one who really "ran the show." They enjoyed hosting parties at the lake, and often invited Bruce's Notre Dame colleagues to spend the evening or day at the lake. On one occasion, Bruce was teaching a colleague to waterski, and they got her up on two skis. Everyone in the boat was trying to signal to her to try dropping a ski, but later found out that without her glasses she could barely see the back of the boat!

Bob remembers spending summers with friends at the lake, including Bob Axleberg (west shore), the Green girls (south shore), John Heckberg (cove), and Rick Doolittle (west shore). He remembers walking around the lake, play cards on the boat, and later when they could drive, they would go to dances at the Diamond Lake Yacht Club. Bob Axelberg was in a band for a while and they played at the Yacht Club one summer.

At Birch Lake, Bruce enjoyed sailing whenever conditions allowed. He appreciated the skill and patience that sailing required and spent many hours on the lake with family and friends. He sailed regularly in the



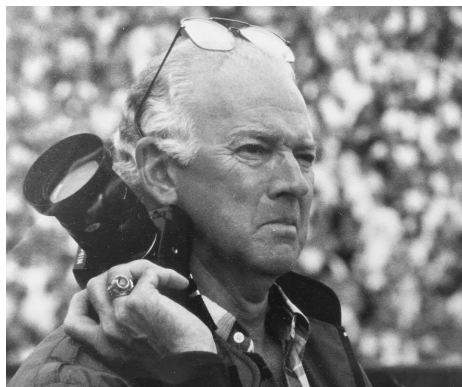
Bryce Milligan, Bruce Harlan, and Amber Holleman - teaching sailing at Camp T, summer 1998.

Sunday MC races for many years.

One of the ways Bruce shared his love of sailing was through volunteering at Camp Tannadoonah. Over the years, he taught many young campers how to sail, introducing them to the basics of steering, sail handling, and reading the wind. His calm teaching style helped new sailors gain confidence on the water, and many campers remember him as one of the people who sparked their interest in sailing.

Bruce and JJ were often seen enjoying evening boat rides together. They were active members of the Birch Lake community and valued the friendships they built over the years. Bruce served as Commodore of the Yacht Club in 1971, and also served on the Board of Directors for Camp Fire and Camp Tannadoonah for many years in the late 90s and early 2000s.

Bruce spent more than 40 years at the University of Notre Dame, where he created the University's photographic department and served as its first chief photographer. A 1949 Notre Dame graduate, he documented countless aspects of university life, including football games, commencements, campus construction projects, and visits by notable individuals. He eventually retired after 44 years as Director of Photography and Television Production.



Bruce on the sidelines at Notre Dame

Friends and neighbors remember Bruce as friendly, approachable, and genuinely interested in other people. During his years at Notre Dame, he worked closely with University president Father Theodore Hesburgh and photographed generations of students, faculty, and staff. His photographs helped document much of Notre Dame's modern history.

Bruce's accomplishments extended well beyond Birch Lake. He received Notre Dame's Presidential Award for outstanding service, taught photography for the American Film Institute, and had one of his photographs of Father Hesburgh selected for use on a United States commemorative postage stamp.

Despite those accomplishments, many people at Birch Lake remember Bruce simply as a good neighbor, a dedicated volunteer, and someone who enjoyed sharing his knowledge and

Editor's Note: This week's history article is particularly near and dear to my heart. Mr. Harlan was a board member and volunteer sailing instructor at camp when I was a camper. I later had the opportunity to teach sailing classes with him as a counselor at camp when I was in high school and college.

I can still picture Mr. Harlan flying across the lake on his purple and yellow jet ski to come teach campers to sail. On light wind days, he liked to quiz the campers on sailing terminology, and if they got it wrong he would turn quickly and spray them with the rooster tail from the jet ski.

Mr. Harlan taught us three rules for sailing that we were never allowed to break.

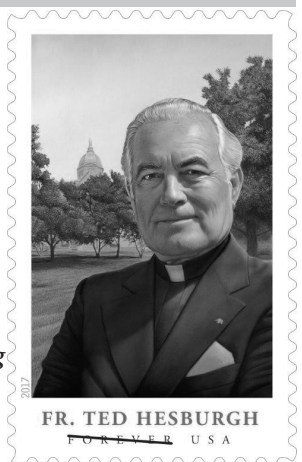
- 1) Never go out on the sailboat without a life vest.
- 2) Never turn your back to the sail.
- 3) Never jibe your boat.

To this day, I have a hard time turning my back to the sail or jibing the boat because I can hear his voice lecturing us about being safe on the sailboat.

When I was just starting out as the Camp Director in 2006, I had numerous lunch dates with Mr. Harlan and Judy Olson. They had both served on the board for camp, and I knew they always had my back. Those first few summers were tough, and those lunch meetings helped me not give up even when things seemed bleak.

In later years when camp was thriving, I would still reach out to Mr. Harlan a couple times a year for advice, or to get lunch together at Elia's in South Bend. He was a wonderful mentor and friend and is dearly missed at Birch Lake and at Camp.

One of Bruce's photos was the inspiration for a postage stamp honoring Father Ted Hesburgh in 2017



interests with others. His contributions to both Notre Dame and the Birch Lake community left a lasting impact on the many people whose lives he touched.

In later years, Bruce and JJ split their time between their home in South Bend, their cottage at Birch Lake, and condo in Florida during the winter. They continued to enjoy entertaining friends at the lake, and cocktail cruises in the evening on their pontoon boat.

Photos and information for this story were contributed by Bob Harlan, Julie Lacy, and Amber Holleman.

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Three of the four Grundy kids on the last day of school. Kieran (finishing 3rd grade), Elyse (finishing 9th grade) and Harrison (finishing 1st grade). Avery (finishing 11th grade didn't have any finals on the last day of school so he opted to sleep in and skipped the photo.



Meryl Dobson, granddaughter of Mike and Lisa Dobson (North Shore)



Linda Bergan (cove) took her granddaughter Lily (left) and cousin Lia (right) to Chicago to celebrate Lily's sweet 16!



Anakin Olguin, son of Dakota and Crystal Olguin. Anakin is the grandson of Jeanne Weaver and Great-Grandson of Doug and Julie Weaver (South Shore)



Ace and Beau Ponsler (South Shore) sitting on the boat in the rain drizzle on Sunday. True Lake Boys.



Theo and Rosy Englert visiting the Troeger's before going to camp this week!



Birch Lake men golfed at Pine View on June 22. Left to right: Ed Dierlam, Craig Fredlake, Gus Eshleman, Mark Caenepeel, Tom Decocker, Ed Levy, Tim Steffen, Ray Scholes, Pat McGann, Mike Machalleck, Bryan Caenepeel, Bud Hall, Dave Qualls. Not pictured: Steve Frew.

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EMERGENCY HEART DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) locations on Birch Lake

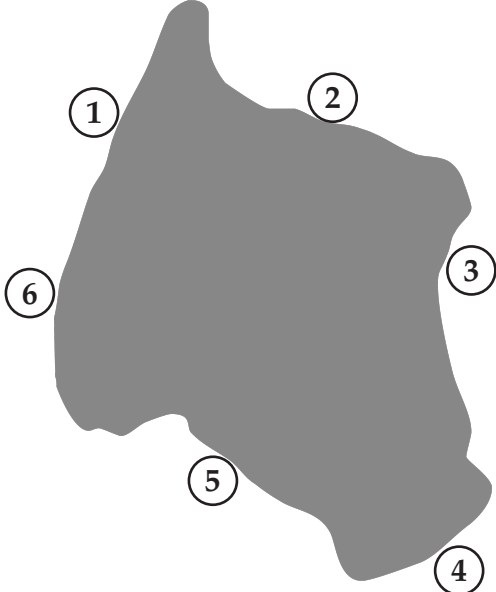
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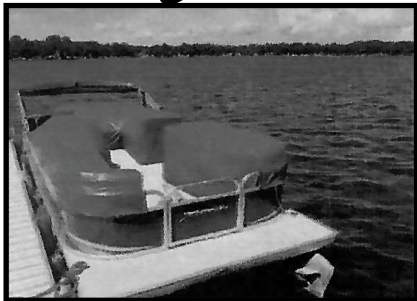
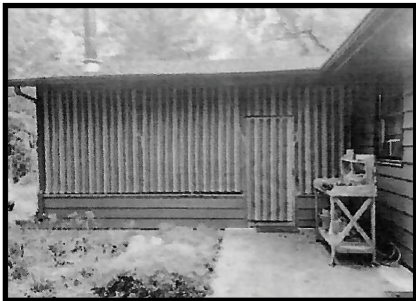


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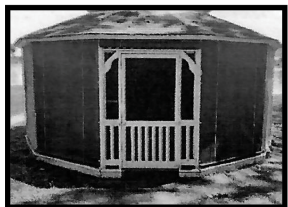
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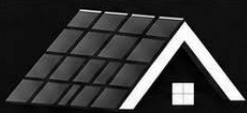
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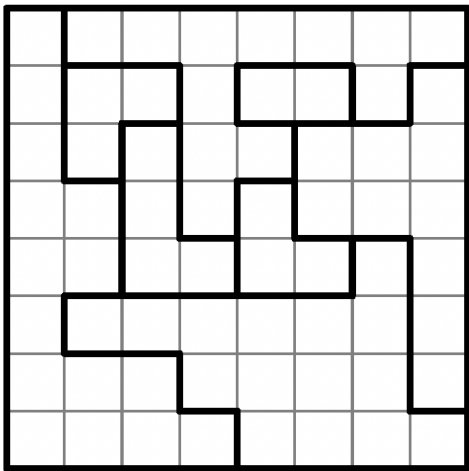
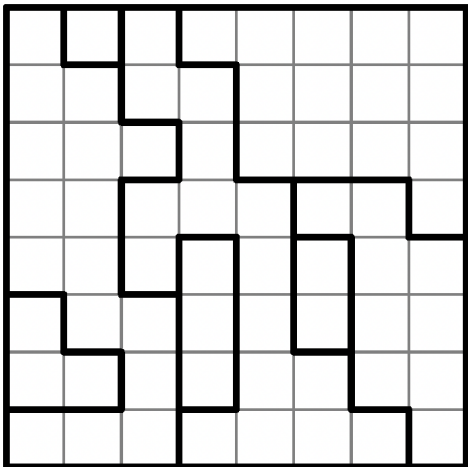
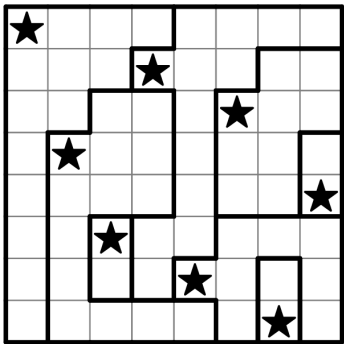


PUZZLE PAGE

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 before you try them for yourself!

Star Battle Puzzle: EXAMPLE

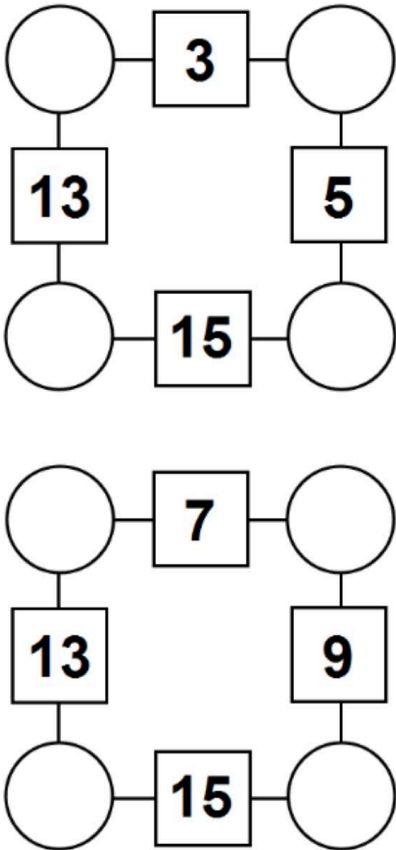


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				5			9	3
2	9					5		
	5	3				9	2	
		6					3	8
7	1			8				
	3				5	4	8	
				4	1			

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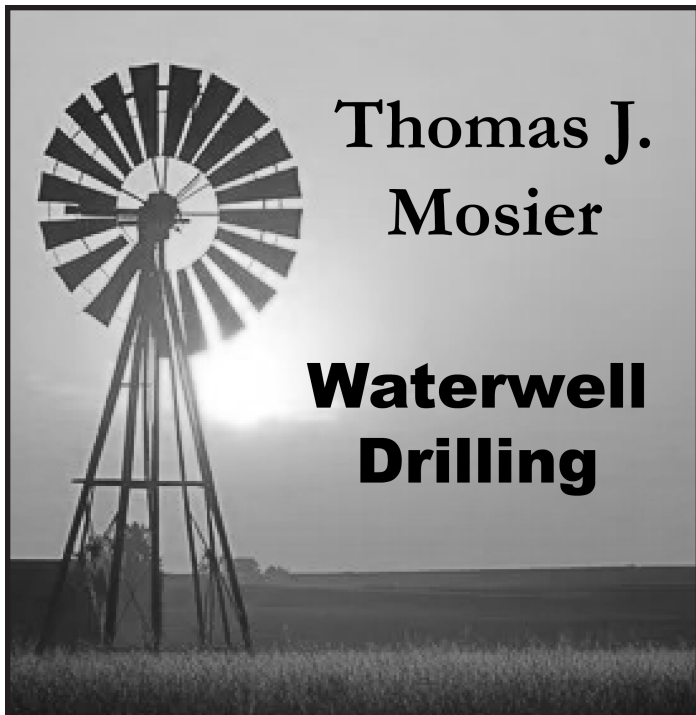
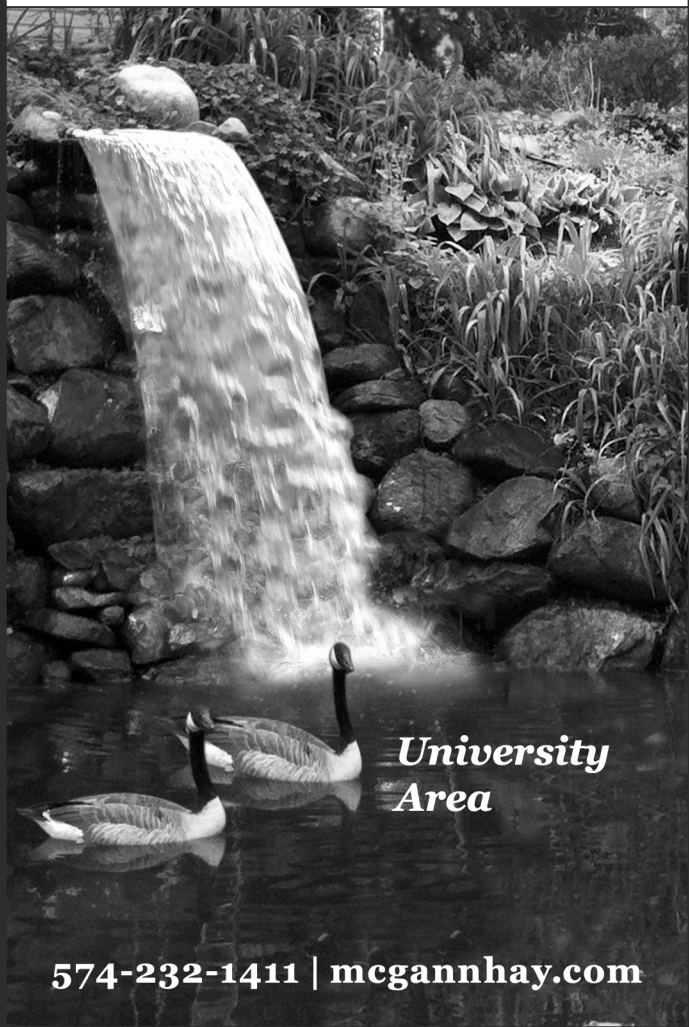
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We Know How to List, Market, and Sell



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



Above & Beyond
Cressy & Everett
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701 Spruce St Dowagiac, MI

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 FUNNIES



I tried organizing a
hide-and-seek
tournament...

but good players are
hard to find.

If you ever need to
scream and let all your
feelings out, I highly
recommend a
cornfield.

There's no judgment...
And they're all ears.

PIER LOGIC

DOCKS • LIFTS • STORAGE • SERVICE

From custom dock and lift solutions to seasonal installation, removal, storage, and maintenance — Pier Logic keeps your waterfront ready all year long.



DOCK & LIFT
SALES



INSTALLATION
& REMOVAL



BOAT LIFT
SERVICE & REPAIR



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SERVICES



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