



Summer, 2023

[www.mybirchlake.org](http://www.mybirchlake.org)

*Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement  
Of Birch Lake and Its Environment*

**From the President –**

What a beautiful summer it has been so far! I hope you all have been able to bask in those wonderful days up here enjoying your amazing lakes. Personally, I haven't had this much fun packed into a summer since school break oh so many years ago!!

I usually save my nostalgic ramblings for the winter letter, but please indulge me. Looking at each bright summer day I am struck by how similar they seem initially. However, like all things, upon closer inspection they are overflowing with unique details. Similarly, our Birch Lake Association appears much like the organization created decades ago but is unique and continues to evolve.

One of the most important consistencies through this time is the strong sense of community BLA has and continues to foster. I believe this connection has deepened in the past years and I hope it will for many years to come.

The most remarkable growth has come recently in how we interact as a community. The electronic membership system has been a huge success! I have been amazed by how much more membership engagement it has created. Please continue to embrace the changes, forgive the setbacks, and engage more frequently!! Tell us what you like, so we can keep doing it, and what we can do better with suggestions on how we might improve.

I need to make a correction. I frequently say, "this is not my organization". That is incorrect. It is mine, but it is just as much yours. It is OUR Birch Lake Association. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you all. Specifically, I am humbled by the support I have been given by the amazing Birch Lake Association Board of Directors. For many years, they have allowed me to stand in front while they paid the bills, collected the dues, sampled the water, managed the website, attended educational seminars, represented us at meetings, set up a new membership

system, wrote the newsletter....to list only a short sample of their unwavering efforts. Like their efforts, there are too many people to list since that would also include our entire families who also carry more than their share. But know that I recognize all your hard work and applaud your dedication.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! Those words do not adequately reflect the level of appreciation I feel, but please accept them as my best effort at expressing heart-felt gratitude to you all!!

Paul Blomgren  
President, Birch Lake Association  
[pmblogren@yahoo.com](mailto:pmblogren@yahoo.com)



Facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/mybirchlake/](https://www.facebook.com/mybirchlake/)

Hackensack Chamber Website  
[www.hackensackchamber.com](http://www.hackensackchamber.com)

BLA is a member of **Minnesota Lakes and Rivers  
Advocates:**

<http://www.mnlakesandrivers.org/>



## 2023 Dates to Know

- July 29 – Annual Membership Meeting Hackensack City Park – details on page 3!
- August 12 - Northwoods Art & Book Festival
- September 20 - “Indeed We Can” Fundraiser – details on page 6
- September 22-24 - Chainsaw Event
- September 25 – An Afternoon with Marcie Rendon
- January 12-14, 2024 - Back to Hack

## An Afternoon with Marcie Rendon | Monday, September 25, 1 PM at the Union Congregational Church



Are you a lover of literature and interested in learning more about Native American voices? Join us for a special event featuring award-winning author and poet Marcie Rendon, an enrolled member of the White Earth Band of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe. This is a rare chance to hear directly from an author who has made a significant impact in the literary world.

Don't miss this opportunity to meet and engage with Marcie Rendon. Whether you are a student, a literature enthusiast, or simply interested in learning more about Native American culture, this event promises to be an enriching experience. Reservations are required - reserve your spot on [northwoodsartscouncil.org](http://northwoodsartscouncil.org)

**28th Annual Art and Book Festival**  
 Saturday, August 12 | 9am - 3pm  
 3rd Street & Lake Avenue, Hackensack

OVER 44 ARTISTS PARTICIPATING | 35 AUTHORS SIGNING & SELLING

CHILDREN'S ART TENT MAKING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS  
 WonderTrek

**PRESENTING AUTHOR**  
 FRANK WEBER  
 "Creative Crime Solving with Forensics" at 10:30 am in the UCC Sanctuary

**CRAFT BEER • FOOD • LIVE MUSIC**  
 LOWEST BLANDING ART & LITERATURE FESTIVAL IN MINNESOTA

**RENDZVOUS BREWING**  
 Pies by Guys  
 Finer Meats & Eats  
 Strudel Haus  
 Teresa's Wicked Tasty Food  
 A Grain of Good  
 Soulshine Cyclery Coffee  
 Homemade Fudge  
 Brambleberry Farm

**WAYNE AND THE BOYS**  
 Entertainment  
 9 am - 3 pm

northwoodsartscouncil.org | nachackensack@gmail.com  
 Facebook

**Birch Lake Association**  
**Annual meeting**  
**July 29, 2023**

Hackensack City Park

(We will meet in the Community Center in case of  
inclement weather!)



4:30 PM Hot dogs & Hamburgers provided by the BLA Board of Directors  
Bring your own drinks.

5:00 PM Official membership meeting – where we try to bring you up to  
date on all the things!

*Election of officers and directors.*

POSITION	NAME	TERM BEGINNING
President	Tim Funkmeyer	2023
Vice President	Mark Larison	2023
Treasurer	Paul Blomgren	2023
Secretary	Steve Hanneman	2023
Director	Sue Holthaus	2023
Director	Shirley Johnson	2023
Director	Mary Knautz	2023
Director	Jim Madland	2023
Director	Betty Martin	2023
Director	Gary Martin	2023
(Director	Katie Noonan	2022)
Director	Jackie Schumacher	2023
Director	Rick Zaske	2023

**5:30 Door prize drawings!**

# Summer 2023



Thanks to the Hackensack Lions and American Legion, we now have an AED readily available near the boat launch – south side of the Chamber Building.



After a brief weather delay, the BLA 4<sup>th</sup> of July Boat Parade was short but successful! With many families choosing to watch from their docks this year!



Thanks to Mark Larison for repairing and repositioning the No Wake sign in Miller Bay!

Sweetheart Days was a great event again this year! Thanks to *all* of the local organizations and businesses who contributed to its success!



## Aquatic Plants in Birch Lake, What Have You Noticed?

Mark Larison, BLA Director, Water Quality



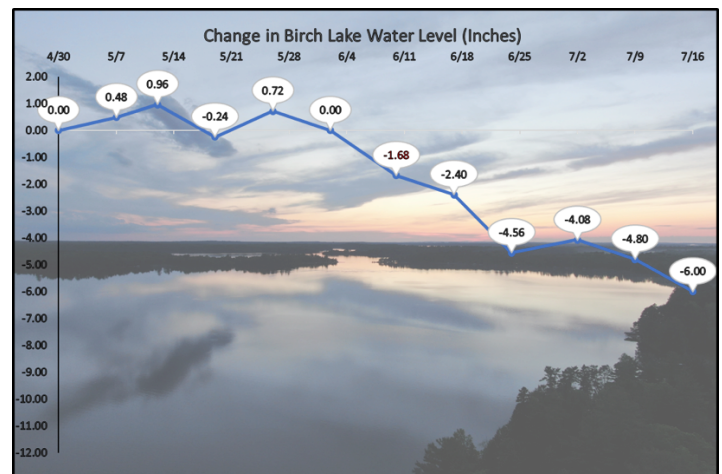
Have you noticed an increase in lake weed growth this year? This is my 4th year doing Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) surveys on Birch Lake. I'm looking for the most dangerous AIS plant invaders, like Eurasian Milfoil, Starry Stonewort, and Curly-Leaf Pondweed. I sampled many areas in Birch Lake this month and I am happy to report not detecting any AIS plants.

No detected AIS Plants is a great thing, but I have seen a very noticeable increase in a plant I first found last year on the northwest side of the big island, and it has now really taken off in many areas of Birch Lake. I reviewed my samples with Cass County AIS specialists and confirmed it is NOT AIS. It is either Small Pondweed or Leafy Pondweed, both are native plants, most likely been here longer than any of us. See photos and you'll probably recognize it. These are strong stemmed plants. When you grab a bunch of it, you get a 'rope' of them, about 6 feet long. It's growing in 4-6 feet of water. It has small blooms above the water and when it's thick, it forms mats on the surface.

Are we doomed to an increase in weediness? I don't think so, at least not so soon. Many Cass County lakes are reporting increased native aquatic plant growth (weeds). It's possible low rainfall and fewer storm events in the past year have contributed to clearer water (our secci disk was 14 feet in June this year). Maybe our native pondweeds are thrilled to have more sunlight through the clearer water.

Let's take a longer-term view: Much more important than watching native aquatic plant increase/decrease cycles, is tracking our ongoing water quality measures. We have been sampling water quality monthly since 2008!! Again, I'm happy to report

stability in our combined measures. However, the individual measure to watch most closely is Phosphorus, which is trending very slightly upward on our lake: Phosphorus is a limiting nutrient, meaning **the more phosphorus is available, the more plants and algae there will be in the lake**. Major sources of phosphorus include human and animal wastes, soil erosion, detergents, septic systems, and runoff from fertilized lawns. We encourage all our Birch Lake Association members to do whatever they can to control sources of contamination to our lake water.



Water level is down about 6 inches since May 1.  
From Fred Karlisch



COLD BEER. WARM FUZZIES. INDEED WE CAN.

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

3 - 11 PM

711 15th Avenue NE Minneapolis, MN, 55413

We are excited to announce an upcoming event that combines our love for Birch Lake and Indeed Brewing Company's dedication to giving back to the community. Through the "Indeed We Can" fundraiser!

"Indeed We Can" is a charitable initiative that puts the power to make a difference directly in the hands of Indeed's employees. In recognition of his love for Birch Lake, Alex Kurtz, head brewer at Indeed, nominated the Birch Lake Association.

In this fundraiser, funds will go toward protecting Birch Lake, its natural surroundings, our fishery, and wildlife for future generations. Indeed Brewing Company has graciously agreed to donate 100% of net proceeds to the Birch Lake Association.

Please mark your calendars and spread the word among your friends, family, and neighbors. Together, we can make a significant difference in preserving Birch Lake's ecological health.

If you have questions or would like to contribute to the event in any way, please contact us at [mybirchlake@gmail.com](mailto:mybirchlake@gmail.com).

With Cold Beer and Warm Fuzzies...see you at Indeed Brewery!

Paul Blomgren President & The Board Members of the Birch Lake Association



## Growth Zone

We've been using our web-based membership software since February. Your response has been very encouraging! We have collected membership dues from 163 Individual and Family members and 47 Business Partners. In addition, you were kind enough to donate \$110 specifically to replace the Martin House and \$375 for use as the Board sees fit.

At this point, if you have paid your 2023 membership dues, you can use your registered email to either sign on in a web browser or on the Member Plus app to update your contact information and to find contact information for your lake neighbors or for our business partners – there are even maps! Our plan is to work with businesses to improve their visibility and maybe offer coupons or discounts to our members. We hope to have the directory in a printable format with access to print it within the next couple of months.

You can also access resource information about Shoreline Restoration, Fishing Regulations, AIS monitoring and more..

As members, please think about what you would like to see added to our process. Would you use a chat feature? How about more resource information, and what are you interested in learning about? We'll have a short discussion about this at the annual meeting.

Thank you so much for helping this organization – *your* organization – move forward.

- Download from the iTunes store here - [MemberPlus iOS version](#). **NOTE:** iOS 10 (or higher) are supported.
- Download from the Google Play store here - [MemberPlus Android version](#)



### BLA Officers 2022-23

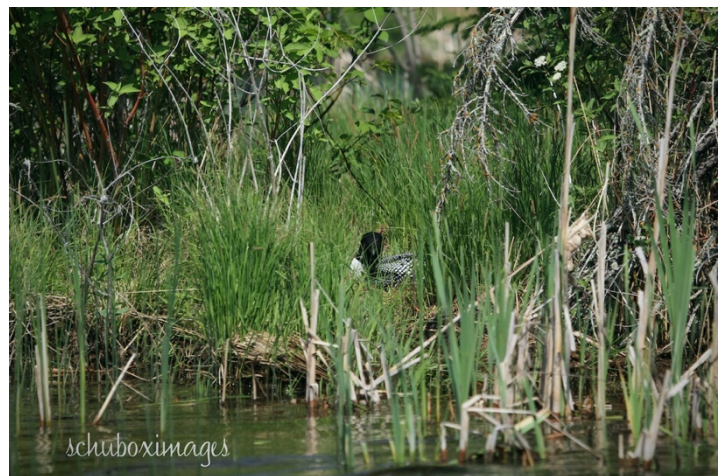
**Paul Blomgren, President**  
**Gary Martin, Vice President**  
**Steve Hanneman, Secretary**  
**Tim FunkMeyer, Treasurer**

### BLA Board of Directors

**Sue Holthaus (Website)**  
**Shirley Johnson**  
**Mary Knautz**  
**Mark Larison (AIS)**  
**Jim Madland (Water Quality)**  
**Betty Martin**  
**Katie Noonan**  
**Jackie Schumacher (Newsletter)**  
**Rick Zaske (Water Quality)**

### BLA Board Contact

[Mybirchlake@gmail.com](mailto:Mybirchlake@gmail.com)  
[info@mybirchlake.org](mailto:info@mybirchlake.org)



It has been a quiet year for loons on Birch Lake – only two active nests were identified, both were natural nests. One chick hatched on 6/18 and as of this writing is still doing well. We placed three artificial nesting platforms with a grant from the MN DNR Loon Restoration Program. Often loons take a year or two to get used to an ANP in their area, so we will see what next year brings!



*PO Box 125  
Hackensack, Mn 56452*

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Visit us at: [www.mybirchlake.org](http://www.mybirchlake.org)

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