

Birch Lake Association

Box 125, Hackensack, MN www.mybirchlake.org

Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement of Birch Lake and Its Environment.

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER, 2013

Minutes of the Spring Board of Directors Meeting Held Saturday, May 4, 2012

Present: Gary Martin, Betty Martin, Gene Tuftin, Jim Madland, Paul Blomgren, Rick Zaske, Mark Glende, Barbara Harrington

Treasurer's Report: from Shirley Johnson
For the period 7/24/2012 - 5/8/2013:

Income:	\$2,538.04
Expenses:	\$1,920.13
Bank Account Balance:	\$13,267.57

Total Memberships to date as of 6/1/13:

Family Membership Renewals:	53
New Family Memberships:	7
Business Memberships (new or renew)	8

Annual Meeting planning: The Annual Meeting will be on July 27; the planning subcommittee will handle all other details (including a LakeFest/Birch Bash and the Art/Essay Contest). Anyone interested in helping plan this event should contact one of the directors.

Beaver Control: Barb reported that Jeff Peterson trapped 7 beavers this past winter.

Designated Director Position: Rick contacted Dean Garoutte who agreed to serve as the business representative on the BLA Board.

Garbage Control: Mark reports that he has purchased a litter bag dispenser to place at the public access. Mark will order a plaque for the dispenser; Jim will determine how to hang the dispenser. Still waiting on the garbage cans until we can coordinate garbage pickups with the city.

Buoys: Northwoods Dock will check for and make any needed repairs to buoys and the lights before placement this spring. Gary will place an additional buoy on the sandbar in the northwest bay for the spring until the reeds are up and then remove it.

Board Meeting Minutes, continued

Archives/Association History: Former historian Carol McCormick has substantial Association history materials and Barb will contact her. Further discussion tabled.

Ad size for Chainsaw Event: Approved increasing our ad in the Chainsaw Event booklet to a ½ page. At our booth this year, the Board again will hand out BLA items and host a DNR representative on Saturday.

Additional backpack and book donation: Mark Glende acquired 60 backpacks and 12 boxes (about 300) books and has donated these on behalf of the Birch Lake Association to the WHA Elementary School. Board Members stuffed cards in each backpack noting the donation was from BLA. **Thank you, MARK!!**

BLA Annual Meeting Saturday July 27

>> **Watch for More Info to Come!!** <<

Join us for the Birch Lake Association Annual Meeting. This meeting is OPEN TO EVERYONE. We need your input on issues that affect us on Birch Lake. If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact a BLA Board Member (see the Directory for contact numbers).

Deep Portage Scholarships Awarded

Each year, the Birch Lake Association sponsors two scholarships to Deep Portage Summer Camps for children (or relatives) of BLA members. This year, the camp scholarships were awarded to **Zach Fuchs** (Shirley Johnson's grandson) and **James Blomgren** (Dorothy Harrington's grandson, Paul & Lynne Blomgren's son).

Deep Portage is still accepting applications for Summer Camp programs. For more information, go to www.deep-portage.org

Greetings from the President

From BLA President Gary Martin

After the earliest ice out in anyone's memory last year (March 24) we go to one of the latest ever (May 10). Good old Minnesota! We seem to be the "land of extremes" these days. We hope by the Fourth of July we can put a toe in and not freeze it.

This is the year to renew memberships – talk to your neighbors if they aren't members. We would also like to encourage any members who would like to get more involved with BLA to call one of the Directors or call ME at 218- 675-6485. We would like some new ideas.

Congrats to us. We have managed to not get any invasive species in Birch Lake YET (except those pesky snails) Lake Winnie is the latest for infestation of zebra mussels. So continue to do what you've been doing; it has worked so far. If you see plants or animals that you don't think should be there call the DNR or one of the directors.

The lake testing last summer showed some terrible numbers:

Phosphorus: More than doubled from June (9) to September (20!).

Chlorophyll A: From 3 in June to 7 in September

Water Clarity: Secchi disk reading went from 14ft in June to 7ft in September.

The water quality went down very badly by the end of summer. I called a DNR guy and he said it might be explained by the long, hot summer. He said we should look at the numbers this year before we draw any conclusions about the lake water quality. More on this in the next newsletter and at the annual meeting.

Remember to keep Saturday July 27th open to attend the annual meeting.

Remember to give the old lawn mower a break and to leave a nice 3 to 4 foot buffer zone between your lawn and the lake.

Hope everybody has an enjoyable and safe summer.

President Gary Martin

Hackensack Lending Library

From Diane Zaske, Lending Librarian

Hackensack's Lending Library opens June 10. The little log building by the city dock is open to all visitors and residents. No fee and no card needed, so stop in any Mon.-Sat. Usually open morning to mid-afternoon. Pick up a good book to enjoy at the lake. We have a very large children's room so bring the kids, too! Come check us out!



**Watch for our Book SALE
July 9 during Sweetheart Days!**

AIS Monitoring Training

From Rick Zaske

I was at the Association of Cass County Lakes (ACCL) meeting picking up the lakes monitoring containers for Birch Lake. Joe Eisterhold is the area Invasive Species Specialist out of Park Rapids. He is going to be putting on a training session for lake association representatives on AIS monitoring in June. If you are interested in taking the training, contact Joe Eisterhold at 218-699-7293 or 218-255-1756 (cell).

Hackensack Community Garage Sale

June 14-15

From the Chamber of Commerce

In conjunction with the Canoe Race events this year, the Hackensack Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a Community Garage sale for those within a three-mile radius of Hackensack. For \$20, you can be listed on a map of the sale sites published in the Pine Cone Press and available at the Visitor's Center. Sign up and pay the fee in the Visitor's Center (at the City Park).

Outside the three-mile radius? No problem. You can register for a table in the Community Building. For more details, call the Chamber of Commerce at 218-675-6135.

**There will also be a Craft Sale
Saturday, June 15 at the City Park.**

BLA Purple Martin House News

From Gary Martin

I went in to clean the boxes in late April and there were already 4 males and 2 females there. I had never seen birds there that early. I don't know what they ate since there was still ice on the lake! However they survived and when I went to clean the sparrow nests out of the houses in late May, there were about 12-15 martins around. There were no eggs at that time. They usually start laying about the first of June. I hope we are as successful as last year when they hatched out bunches of little martins. Jim Madland and I will be tending the house again. If you'd like to help, contact me at 218-675-6485.



"Back to the Fifties" Benefit for LLAWF

August 3, 2013 5-10 pm.

at the Northern Lights Casino in Walker

Lay out the poodle skirts and saddle shoes, and get ready to "rock and roll" to Robby Vee and the Rock-N-Roll Caravan. They'll be playing all your favorite songs, including his legendary father Bobby Vee's greatest hits. Raffle drawings, silent auction, dance contest, and more fun. Tickets are available online at www.northernlightscasino.com.

A Benefit for the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation



Loons Impacted By Invasive Species

From the LLAWF Newsletter

Nearly 900 loons and probably more died while migrating south across Lake Michigan last fall. Scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) think a complex interplay of invasive species may be the cause of the loon die-off. The researchers suspect **invasive zebra and quagga mussels** create ideal conditions in Lake Michigan for the bacteria that produces **botulism toxin**. The mussels filter the water so it's very clear, allowing an algae called cladophora to grow. The algae settles to the lake bottom and rot creating an environment without oxygen, an ideal home for bacteria that produce botulism. The toxin is ingested by tiny worms and freshwater shrimp, which are eaten by fish, including the **invasive round goby**, which are then eaten by diving birds – including loons.



Some Minnesota loons spend nearly a month on Lake Michigan fattening up before their long flight south. Kevin Kenow, a USGS wildlife biologist in LaCrosse, Wisconsin that tracks loons with radio transmitters reports the diving patterns of loons on Lake Michigan show they are diving to the lake bottom for food. It's at the lake bottom where scientists believe fish such as the round gobies pick up botulism before they're eaten by loons.

Although it is unclear how many of the Minnesota's loon population has been affected (DNR reports the population appears stable at more than 10,000 adult loons), scientists are worried if the die-off continues, it could be a concern the long term viability of loons.

Leech Lake River and Pine River Watershed Projects Underway

From the LLAWF

Both the Leech Lake Watershed and Pine River Watershed are in the second year of a four-year project to assess the health of the waters in these respective watersheds. The lakes of Cass County will lie within one of these watersheds. Extensive monitoring, both biological and chemical, is currently underway along with collection of existing data on the watersheds' lakes and streams.

The watershed restoration and protection projects are part of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's 10-year rotating cycle to assess the health of all 81 major watersheds in Minnesota. At a community kick-off meeting for the Leech Lake Watershed Project, attendees identified major water quality issues for the watershed as shore land development, aquatic invasive species, failing septic systems, storm water runoff, and groundwater protection.

What is a watershed? A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common water body. What happens on the land within that geography is shed to the water. Individual lakes have their own watershed, which eventually drains to the central water body of the watershed. For the Leech Lake Watershed, all water drains to Leech Lake; for the Pine River Watershed all the water drains to the Pine River. Both watersheds drain directly to the Mississippi River and each is defined by its rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands.

Why are watersheds important? As water flows across the land on its journey to a major river or lake, it can be harmed by poor development or agricultural practices, storm water runoff, faulty septic systems, and industrial discharges. It's what we do on the land that determines the quality of our waters. Throughout the next two years of the projects there will be many opportunities for lake associations and individuals to get involved in determining the future quality of their waters. For more information on your watershed, go to www.pca.state.mn and search for "watershed approach."

Plunging Populations of the Minnesota State Butterfly – the Monarch

Have you seen many monarch populations in the past few summers? The monarch butterfly – Minnesota's state butterfly – lives in the northern United States and Canada in the summer and migrates to a specific forest region of Mexico in the winter.



Scientists report a drop of nearly 60% in the number of Monarch butterflies migrating to Mexico – the lowest level in 20 years. The decline is seen as a statistical and long-term trend thought to be due a combination of factors including loss of habitat in Mexico and reductions in milkweed, their primary food source, in northern climates due to drought, pesticide use on crops, and clearing of natural habitats.

The millions of Monarchs cluster so densely on tree boughs in the specific reserve in Mexico where they reside in the winter that researchers don't count butterflies; they measure the amount of forest acres they cover. This past winter, butterflies covered just 2.93 acres down from 7.14 acres last year.

Milkweed *used to* grow in abundance on natural shorelines in Minnesota. Want to help save the Monarchs? Plant some milkweed along YOUR shoreline.



Deep Portage Learning Center Summer Public Programs

Deep Portage is offering a number of day programs this summer that are open to the public. Deep Portage is located east of Hackensack. For directions or for more information, check out their website: www.deep-portage.org

Indoor Climbing Wall: The DP wall is 35 ft. tall and is designed to challenge a wide variety of climbing abilities. We provided all equipment, instruction, and belaying. This is a great family outing for anyone 8 yrs to adult.

Fee: \$10 per climber.



Tree Top Tower Hike: The DP Observation Tower is 55ft. tall. It is a 20 minute hike to the highest point at Deep Portage. On a clear day it is possible to see 15 miles. Comfortable walking shoes are suggested. The hike can be strenuous, but if taken slowly is very doable. This program is great for all ages.

Fees: \$5 per person; \$3 for children, seniors, and members.

Family Archery: This is a fun way for the family to get out and learn a new skill. All instruction and equipment is provided. The equipment we have is appropriate for ages 8 and older. We have recurve and compound bows. Our Archery Range is very sunny: we recommend sunglasses, hat, and sunscreen. Includes a 5 minute hike to the Archery Range.



Fees: \$5 for adults, \$3 for children, seniors, and members.

Family Canoe Trip: We will guide our merry band of canoes up the Little Boy River. It is suggested to have one adult with each child attending the trip. Toddlers and younger children are welcome. Please bring life jackets for them. We will provide all the equipment for ages 8 years and older. This trip can last a couple of hours. It is suggested that you bring a snack and sun protection for little ones. We will see who shows up and plan our trip accordingly. This will be a fun, safe afternoon on the rivers and lakes of Deep Portage.



Fees: is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children, seniors, and members.

Schedule of Classes at Deep Portage

June:

25 (Tuesday) – Indoor Climbing Wall
26 (Wednesday) – Tree Top Tower Hike

July:

2 (Tuesday) – Family Archery
3 (Wednesday) – Indoor Climbing Wall
15 (Monday) – Family Canoeing
16 (Tuesday) – Family Archery
18 (Thursday) – Tree Top Tower Hike
19 (Friday) – Indoor Climbing Wall
23 (Tuesday) – Tree Top Tower Hike
24 (Wednesday) – Indoor Climbing Wall

August:

6 (Tuesday) – Tree Top Tower Hike
7 (Wednesday) – Family Archery

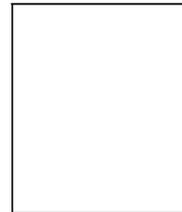
Do you have something you would like to submit to the Newsletter or post on the BLA web site? Send submissions to wordsmith@live.com OR send by US mail to:
K Loftis, 408 4th Ave NE, Mpls, MN 55413

Birch Lake Association

Dedicated to the Preservation and Improvement of Birch Lake and Its Environment

Box 125, Hackensack, MN 56452

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Visit us at: www.mybirchlake.org

Are you receiving a PRINTED copy of this newsletter?? You can save BLA RESOURCES by receiving newsletters by email. Simply send a note to wordsmith@live.com to request this.

Membership Drive Drawing Winners: Jim & Sue DuChene

We received 60 family memberships and 8 business memberships before the June 1 deadline for the special Membership Drive drawing. The winners of the drawing for the Birch Lake Association Logo Jacket are **Jim & Sue DuChene**. Congratulations, Jim & Sue!

Birch Lake Association Membership Dues for 2014-2015 are Due NOW!!

Membership renewals are due this year! Please use the renewal form included with this newsletter to update your info and send in your DUES (\$40 per family; \$50 for business). AND pass on a form to your neighbor! You can also print one from the website: www.mybirchlake.org

We will be printing the BLA Directory this summer, so if you want to be included in the directory (and receive one!), please get your membership forms and dues in **by July 15**.

Join Us for the Annual BIRCH LAKE Fourth of July BOAT Parade

1:00 pm Line Up: Boats will line up to the north of the channel along the eastern shore (east of the Big Island). Entrants should decorate the right (starboard) side of the boat for best viewing from shore (see example in photo at right).

Parade: The parade will circle each lake in the **counterclockwise** direction, first in Big Birch, then continue around Little Birch. Watch for flyers around town for reminders!

