

Weekend of | **July 27, 2024**

# Birch Barker

<http://www.philvital.com/Barker/BirchBarker.htm>

The official summer publication of the  
**Birch Lake Yacht Club**



The first-eve Kids' Kayak race was held last weekend, with a group of kayakers that ranged in age from 8 to 12 years old. The kids had a great time. Congratulations to all the kids who participated, and thanks and all the lakere who helped out.

## COMMODORE'S COMMENTS

Beautiful week and weekend at Birch Lake. There was something for everyone, young and old.

We kicked off the weekend with the Women's Golf outing and luncheon. The number of foursomes was slightly diminished, not for lack of enthusiasm, but because untimely of ailments and broken bones. Those who were able to make it to Spruce Ridge were treated to a great time. Not being a golfer myself, I wanted to attend and chose to help out with the refreshment cart. While Stacey Whiteman expertly maneuvered the golf cart, I hopped out to replenish the thirsty participants with sodas and water. A delicious lunch was served at the Wounded Minnow in Dowagiac and awards were given to the lucky winners.

I was pleased with the turnout for the first, and hopefully annual, Kid's Kayak Race, with ten kids signing up for the event. We had a few who were unable to make it to the starting line, but added an excited eight year-old, who was happy to compete with the nine-

ten's. The kids seemed to enjoy the races and the ice cream treats that followed. All went home with participation gifts, and the winners of the races were awarded gold medals at the family picnic. A big "thank you" to Ray Scholes, Tim Burchell, and John Ball, whose boats helped to keep the racecourse and the children sheltered. Jen Ball and Jill Scholes helped me onshore with timing and serving ice cream. A huge thank you to Amber Grundy, who kayaked alongside the kids serving as our lifeguard. Thankfully, her service wasn't needed as all kayakers made it safely to the finish line.

Winners and participants included:

Layla Petty - winner 11-12 girls  
Connor Caplis - winner 11-12 boys  
Abby Caplis - winner 9-10 girls  
Matt Wodark - winner 9-10 boys  
Bastion (grandson of Paige Como) - winner- 8 and under  
Ava Grove  
Zoe Grove  
Juliana Wodark

Great job! Thank you parents for the taking the time to bring your kids and kayaks to the event.

The Birch Lake Yacht Club Family Picnic was held under clear skies and temperate temperatures on Saturday evening. The event was catered by Red Flame Roots Catering Company, whose

## 2024 Birch Lake Calendar

### JULY

July 25 - Card Night, 7 pm, BLYC, TBA  
July 26 - Men's Golf Outing, 8 am, Hampshire  
July 27 - Don Harman Kidz Sunfish Regatta (Tentative date), King's (north side), TBA

### AUGUST

Aug 3 - Corn & Sausage, 5:30-7 pm, BLYC  
Aug 10 - Board Meeting, 9 am, BLYC  
Aug 17 - Earl Troeger Jr. Memorial MC Interlake Regatta, more info TBA

Aug 21 - Women's Style Show and Luncheon - Woodfire Restaurant, TBA,  
Aug 24 - Fall Dinner & Annual Meeting, TBA  
Aug 29 - Card Night, 7 pm, BLYC, TBA  
Aug 31, Sept. 1 - Sat/Sun, Labor Day Regatta, backup Mon.

### SEPTEMBER

Sept. 7 - Board Meeting, 9 am, BLYC  
Sept. 7 - Sailing Award Lunch, 1 pm, BLYC  
Sept. 7 - Fall Frolic Free Concert, BLYC, TBA

### OCTOBER

October 19 - Bad Patty Luecht Crockpot Challenge (tentative date), TBA

The Birch Barker will consider ads and editorial items for publication. E-mail items to [onlinebarker@gmail.com](mailto:onlinebarker@gmail.com), mail them or put them in the stone mailbox at 63174 Birch Rd. (East Shore). For **editorial concerns contact Editor Phil** at [onlinebarker@gmail.com](mailto:onlinebarker@gmail.com), or at 476-1680 (no text).

For **delivery concerns contact Ron Niezgodski**, [birchbass1@gmail.com](mailto:birchbass1@gmail.com) or 476-9317. For all other matters **contact Commodore Sue Davis**, at [eyesnd76@gmail.com](mailto:eyesnd76@gmail.com) or 574-993-6031. **DEADLINE** is always Noon on the Tuesday of the week before the publication.

# — Birch Lake Notes —



The 2024 Kids' Kayak races start at Lake Park (south side).

selections seemed to be enjoyed by all the attendees.

DJ Michael Wells, from Bad Entertainment, kept the music playing for all to enjoy taking requests from both the young and the old.

The only flaw in an otherwise perfect weekend was the lack of wind on Sunday for our Birch Lake sailors. Hopefully the weather and wind will cooperate for our Don Harman Kidz Sunfish Sailing Regatta this weekend, and the Earl Troeger Junior Memorial MC Interlake Regatta on August 17.

We are also hoping that Mother Nature will cooperate again on the 26th for the Men's Golf outing. Fingers crossed for all the sailors and the golfers on the lake.

Remember, we have card night again on the 25th of this month. All card players are encouraged to attend.

Have a nice week and be safe." May the Memories remain and the view stay the same," on our golden Pond.

~Commodore Sue Davis

## Slow down signs

Do you need a SLOW DOWN sign? Contact Blair Garceau 476-9862. Signs are courtesy of Birch Lake Home Owners Association

## Ladies style show and luncheon

Join us Wednesday, August 21 for the Birch Lake Ladies Style Show and Luncheon at the Woodfire Grill and Trattoria in Dowagiac. Six lovely Birch Lake ladies will model fashions from the Marshall Shoppe.

The luncheon begins at 11 am, and includes a choice of one of three entrees, side salad, dessert, soft drink, tax and tip. The cost is \$32 and must be purchased before the event.

This always sells out so purchase tickets early! Tickets can be purchased by calling Ronni Eshleman 317-418-9557 or Denny Weesner 269-476-2569, Di Wozny 574-315-4915 and Claudia Phipps 574-596-2154. We will also be selling tickets at the Family Picnic on July 20.

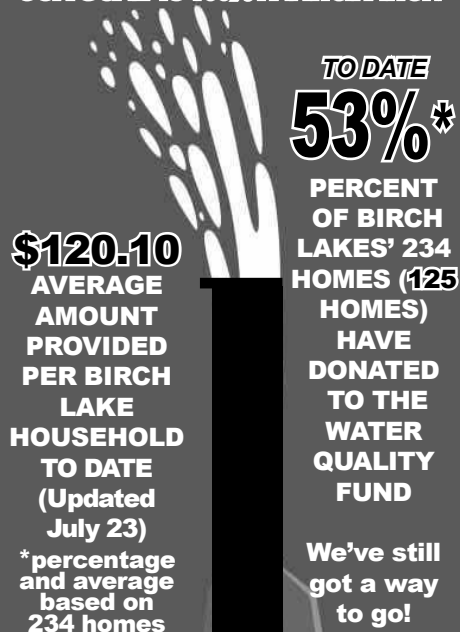
## Save the date for free concert

Some past commodores from Birch Lake would like to present the first "Fall Frolic" on September 7, with the DAWG Band featuring Duane Gundy on mandolin and guitar, Jim Shenk on pedal steel guitar and Randy Horst on upright bass. Their repertoire includes acoustic rockin' folk music and Americana old and new. Stay tuned for further details.

## Birch Lake Yacht Club WATER QUALITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribute now with a click at:  
<https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com>

OUR GOAL IS 100% PARTICIPATION



To donate for **WATER QUALITY** or any BLYC activity or event, use the form in the back of this week's Barker or visit the website above

## BLYC and social media

The Birch Lake Yacht Club **DOES NOT** have a Facebook page, nor is it participating in any form of social media. If you see Birch Lake Yacht Club information on social media, the information has not been provided, checked or approved by the BLYC, and may be incorrect or misleading. If you have questions, please check <http://www.philvitale.com/Barker/BirchBarker.htm>, or contact any BLYC director or officer.

**YOGA at the YACHT CLUB**

Join Claudia Phipps most Thursdays at 9 am at the yacht club for Yoga ... (No yoga July 25) 9 am start, classes are 75 minutes

- \$5 fee goes to water quality

**BRING WITH YOU:**

- Yoga mat
- Two beach towels or blankets for Yoga Nidra Shavasana (the YC is cold with a cold floor, body temp will drop)
- A pillow or two for under the knees and head
- An eye pillow or scarf to block out the light

Introducing

## The Birch Lake Burgee



## FOR SALE NOW

This beautiful, red-white-and-blue BLYC Burgee is just \$20 All proceeds go to Water Quality. To purchase, contact Commodore Sue at [eyesnd76@gmail.com](mailto:eyesnd76@gmail.com) or 574-993-6031 or Phil Vitale @ [onlinebarker@gmail.com](mailto:onlinebarker@gmail.com)

# — Birch Lake Notes —

## Corn & Sausage next weekend

It's almost here! Only a week to go until that fun family event arrives again! Bring your appetites, families and neighbors to the annual Corn & Sausage Roast, next Saturday, August 3. From 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Yacht Club we'll be serving delicious meals certain to get you smiling: your grilled meat choice,

roasted corn, a selection of side dishes, cookies and lemonade or iced tea. Get ready for a bratwurst (\$8), hot dog (\$5) or chicken breast (\$9) meal (we'll only have a limited supply of chicken breasts so come early to try to get what we have!). Pay at the door – no reservations required! Come hungry, visit with your neighbors and leave happy and satisfied! Hope to see you there!

**ONE MORE THING:** We are looking for some folks to take over the Corn and Sausage Roast next year. If you are someone who wants to step into leading a successful and fun event enjoyed each year, the Corn and Sausage Roast may be just the ticket.

Call Blair Garceau (574-261-9817) so you can get a full picture of how organized this event is! Thanks!

## Homeowners Annual Meeting

The Birch Lake annual Homeowners meeting will be held on Saturday, August 10th, directly following the BLYC board meeting, that starts at 9 am. We are pleased to announce that we will have a speaker from the Soil Erosion & Sediment Control from Cass County to discuss how we as homeowners can further protect our lake by preventing unwanted "stuff" into our lake. It should be very informative and helpful. Please join us to hear about all these things and a special section on rain gardens. I want to know more about that!

## Birch Lake Yacht Club FIREWORKS FUND

Our goal for 2024 is

**\$17,500**

Contribute now with a click at:  
<https://store.birchlakeyachtclub.com>



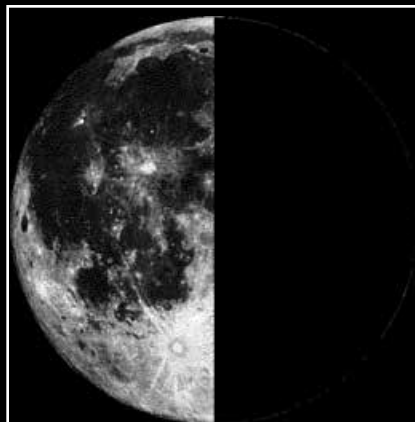
**SUNDAY IS SAILING DAY  
AT BIRCH LAKE ... PLEASE STAY  
OFF THE COURSE!**

## The Moon this Saturday

at midnight. Illuminated Fraction:

Illuminated Fraction: 0.475

0.2 days after last quarter



## Sun and Moon this Week

**Sunrise:** 06:30:45 am

**Sunset:** 21:06:18 pm

**Moonrise:** 00:07:26 am

**Moonset:** 13:58:30 pm

**Hours of Daylight:**

14 Hr 35 Min 32 Sec



# TOUCH DOWN



to the

## Birch Lake Fall Dinner

### Football Tailgate

inside the Birch Lake Yacht Club



# August 24



Cocktails: 530 to 6 pm

Score with a Bullseye Market Tailgate

Enjoy ribs and chicken huddled up with delicious sides

**\$25 ticket for each football fan**

DJ Michael Wells with Bad Entertainment LLC will make this tailgate a real winner!

Wear your favorite football team shirt and kick off the football season at the BLYC!

Tickets available online at [www.birchlakeyachtclub.com](http://www.birchlakeyachtclub.com)

Or make checks payable to the BLYC and mail to:

Julie Dickey, 63276 Birch Rd., Vandalia, MI 49095

Questions? Contact Julie at [jdjuls@aol.com](mailto:jdjuls@aol.com)

**Deadline for reservations: August 16**



# — Birch Lake Family Picnic —

## Fourth Annual Family Picnic success!

It was brought to our attention that this was indeed the 4th Family Picnic! What a great night! The weather was perfect, the food from Red Flame Roots Catering was amazing, and DJ Michael from BAD Entertainment did not disappoint!

Thank you to the 120 Birch Lakers that attended the Family Picnic! We loved celebrating the young kayakers after the first Birch Lake Kayak race! Congrats to you all!

As always, there are many “thank yous” to hand out, and if we miss someone, please forgive us!

Thank you to Ron Niezgodski for stapling our flyer to ALL the barkers! Thank you to Amber and Camp Tannadoonah for lending us the ever so popular nine square! Thank you to the Petty and Dickey families for all the setup/clean up help! Our welcome table was held down by the Bender family, the Karceski family, and the Caplis family! Thank you all for being the “face” of the picnic! Denny Weesner was also present at the welcome table, helping and selling style show tickets, be sure to go to her event! A huge thank you to Nate Sandler and his mom Amanda for managing the food table and making sure everyone left with a full belly! We are always grateful to our friendly neighbors who allow us to park in their spaces. Thank you to the Machallecks, the Williams and Pat Welch for the parking spaces. Lastly, thank you to Cam Butler who stayed and helped vacuum. Of course, no night is complete without Phil and Sandy Vitale being the best bartenders in Vandalia. Thank you Phil and Sandy!

It was SO great to meet new friends, and see so many kids at the BLYC! We hope to see you next year!

~Sarah Petty & Julie Dickey



## EMERGENCY HEART DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) locations on Birch Lake

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

1. **West Shore**, Sheffieck home, 62875 Birch Lakeview Dr.
2. **North Shore**, Smitley home, 14859 Birch Northshore Dr.15046
3. **East Shore**, Vitale home, 63174 Birch Rd.
4. **South Shore**, Eberhart home, 15046 Birch Lakeshore Dr.
5. **South/East Shore**, Troeger home, 63696 Birch Rd.
6. **Southwest Shore**, DeYoung home, 63255 Storey Hill St.

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 immediately.
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 the instructions as they are given.
4. Continue to follow the instructions as given, and stay with the patient until help arrives.

# — Birch Lake Ladies' Golf —

## Birch Lake annual Ladies' FUN Golf Outing

The Ladies of Birch Lake played their annual 9 holes of fun golf at Diamond Lake Spruce Ridge Golf Course this past Friday. We were delighted to have great weather and good friends to golf with. We could hear lots of laughter and cheers when a teammate made a great shot. A big thank you goes out to Staci Whiteman and Sue Davis for driving the beverage cart. Staci and Sue were ready to go with the cool beverages and joyful attitudes that made the day so much fun.

Lunch followed at the Wounded Minnow in Dowagiac. We appreciated that Katha Machalleck, Sue Williams, and Denny Weesner served as our hostesses and helped with the 50/50 (winner: Vickie Rogers).

The following prizes were awarded this year for great golf:

**1st Place Team:** Ronni Eshleman, Jackie Frew, Traci Limes, Becky Wiseman;; **2nd Place Team:** Barb Cassady, Diane Robertson, Allyson Weaver-Gills, Lori Noyer; **3rd Place Team:** Vickie Rogers, Amy Koscielski, Blair Garceau, Connie Young; **4th Place Team:** Sandy Vitale, Carol McCoy, Debbie Soldato; **Longest Drive:** Ronni Eshleman; **Closest to the Pin:** Carol McCoy; **Closest to the Target:** Jackie Frew; **Longest Putt:** Allyson Weaver-Gills.

This year we had a fun time with renaming ourselves with golf names using our birth month and day. The winner of the best golf name went to Denny Weesner (Big Bogey), with honors going to Staci Whiteman as Big Out of Bounds



(check out the first letter of each name).

We had generous sponsors for this year's outing (as of this writing): Patti & Rick Russwurm - Paramount Properties, Inc., Sandy & Phil Vitale, Dan & Sharon Waxman-South Bend, Medical Foundation, Carmen and Debbie Soldato, Barb & Tom Cassady



## FLEET CAPTAIN'S CORNER



### No wind last weekend ...

No wind last weekend . . .

But no complaints. After all, we've been blessed with great sailing wind every other weekend so far this year!

**Don Harman Kidz Regatta  
this Saturday, July 27!**

Parents, Grandparents, Relatives,  
Friends:

Please bring lots of kids to Bob and Leslie King's on the north shore, this Saturday, July 27, from 1:00 to 3:00!

Sailors:

Please bring your boats and arrive

by 12:30 rigged and ready. There will be yellow buoyed picket lines for mooring.

It's all about the kids! Please help get the next generation out sailing on beautiful Birch Lake.

Thank you!

**~FC Steve**

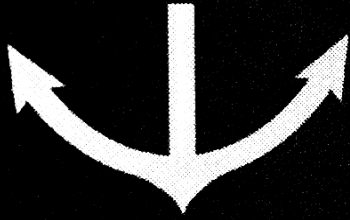


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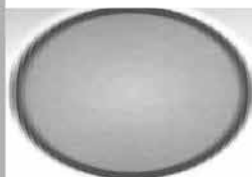
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# — Water Quality Report —

## The effects of high water levels

**H**igh water levels in lakes can have many negative effects including shoreline erosion, flooding and property damage. During high water levels, like we've been experiencing for the past couple of weeks, controlling man-made waves and wakes is essential to the well-being of our shorelines and shallow areas of the lake.

While we cannot control the waves made by Mother Nature, it's certainly possible to limit some of the wave damage caused by our boats.

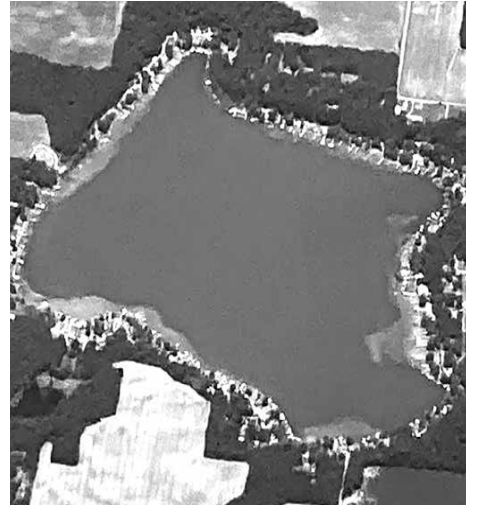
Waves tend to stir up the lake bottom. If significant, they free up and raise into the water column one of its most undesirable possessions – phosphorus. That newly suspended phosphorus enhances turbidity (makes the water cloudier) and increases the phosphorus loading in the lake – which directly affects the growth of all plants and other organisms in the lake, especially algae. Stirring up the lake bottom can also cause the destruction of native aquatic plants by breaking them off at, or pulling them out by, their roots. High water lake levels only

**Please refrain from making large waves and/or accelerating too fast if your prop wash results in the disturbance of the lake bottom. This is especially true when we have water levels like we've experienced the past two weeks.**

enhance this process.

So, please refrain from making large waves and/or accelerating too fast if your prop wash results in the disturbance of the lake bottom. This is especially true when we have water levels like we've experienced the past two weeks.

When operating your boat at wake speed, constantly plot your course to assure you stay the required minimum distance from all shorelines and docks. According to Michigan state law, 100' is the minimum. As we've noted in earlier columns, it's recommended that wake boats maintain a minimum of 500' and



the wake wave should always be in the direction of the middle of the lake.

Most certainly, the lake water level will decrease to normal levels this summer. But in the meantime, be mindful of the effects that high-water levels can have on our lake bottom and shorelines.

If all this information is too much, just remember the old signs you'd see at boat launches and marinas, "You are responsible for your wake!"

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## BLYC Directory deadline

**The cutoff for submitting information for the Birch Lake Directory we're going to publish this year is July 27.**

If you have new listings, changes, corrections or updates, send them to Deb Spratt at [debspratt@comcast.net](mailto:debspratt@comcast.net) or to [onlinebarker@gmail.com](mailto:onlinebarker@gmail.com), and we'll do our best to get them included. Please use the format below to provide the information.

**Cottage # (if known)**

**Last name(s), first name(s)**

**Lake address, Off-lake address**

**Phone number(s)**

**Email address(es)**

**Children(s) names**

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# — Birch Lake Memories —

## The history of Jimmy's Tavern

**E**arlier this summer, Pat Williams (south side) gave me a book about the area more south of us, particularly Baldwin, Prairie, and the lakes that make up that region. After reading it I concluded that most of the information would be found more interesting to residents of Baldwin, Long and Indian Lakes, but not so much for our group here at Birch. However, after reading again about Jimmyville and in particular Jimmy's Tavern, I thought Birch Lakers might be interested in reading about a business that most of us have been to at least once in our years here at Birch.

~Sue Davis

In the early 1940s, the land on the north side of little Baldwin Lake was owned by Fred and Lena Percy. Along with a concrete-block home, they built an adjoining tavern, which they named Percy's Tavern. Shortly thereafter a man named Harold "Jimmy" Zimmerman, a bachelor from South Bend, moved to what he called "Bachelor's Haven" on Carter Lake. Harold considered buying the business from Percy to open up his own enterprise. It is documented that when he was considering buying the business, he asked a friend who also thought of buying the business. Jimmy said, "What will I use (to buy it)? bottle caps?" His friend replied, "That was what I was going to use." Harold beat him to it, and the rest is history. Harold "Jimmy" Zimmerman bought the tavern from Percy in the early 1940s. He began building the present tavern in the fall of 1945 and Jimmy's Tavern officially opened April 1946. Whether he used Bottle caps or real money for the original purchase is not known. Jimmy was known for his strength and zest for life. His friend said people would be leaning against the bar with the whole room

quiet until Jimmy walked in and the place would start to hop. It is told that once a woman who lived at the trailer park in the vicinity, thought her baby drowned in Long Lake, and ran across the road to Jimmy's carrying the child. Jimmy did some CPR and revived the baby. However, he always said her jostling the baby as she ran had a lot to do with the child's recovering.

Jimmy belonged to many clubs and organizations, and was one of the founding fathers of the Cass County Conservation Club. He played the accordion and appeared in many concertinas in the CCCC. He composed songs such as "Jimmy's polka" and "Sweet-hearts again."

He was said to have placed a wooden deer on US 12 as a joke, and fooled a few hunters into taking shots at the defenseless deer. Once when going up north, he was stopped for speeding, and said "You're not going to give me a ticket officer, are you?" The policeman said, "Why shouldn't I?" Jimmy replied, "Because I've got enough already!"

In the early days, Jimmy's Tavern was known for its Friday night fish fries, and for pot lucks. Fishermen brought buckets of smelt for the big fish fry every year.

Although I don't remember it, when we lived on Baldwin Lake I was told that my father used to take me up to Jimmy's and sit me on the bar after he'd come back from working at Notre Dame. I was

just a toddler. That same bar is still standing in Jimmy's front room. It's no wonder that I have a soft spot in my heart for the old bar.

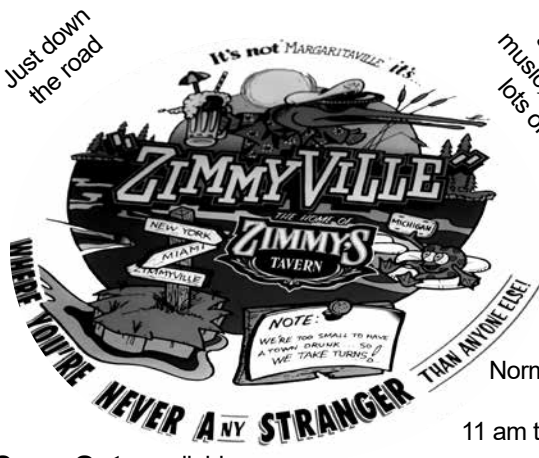
I remember bringing some of my college and Birch Lake friends to Jimmy's to experience the place. There are many stories that are told about that evening, who knows how many of them are true, but I do remember throwing toilet paper out the women's bathroom for some reason. Weird right??

Jimmy lived to be 95. The business area around Jimmy's Tavern is called Jimmyville, and Jimmy painted its name on the barn siding on the southwest corner of Sunset and US 12.

He joked that it was a contest to see which one would last longer, him or the barn. Always a jokester, in his final days he said it appeared to be a tie.

The bar changed hands a few times but still remains a favorite in this area. "Jimmy's celebrated its 75th anniversary a few years back, and it will hopefully be around for many more years.

If you haven't been there, put it on your "things to do" list.




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**Pat McGann, Birch Lake Resident, East Side**



# — Barker Kids of the Week —



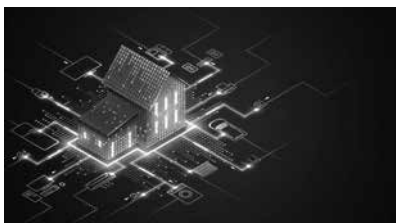
Lakelee Marlow and family celebrate her fifth birthday at the home of her grandparents Dennis and Claudia Phipps (north side).



Julie Ball Lacy (south side) and Debbie Gard Hall (cove) have been friends for 58 years!

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# — Barker Kids of the Week —



Reese and Ellie Hoban, granddaughters of Dave and Terry Carroll (west side) spent last week at Camp KSA, Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral, Florida. Camp activities included Astronaut Training Experience, Mars habitation operations and many hands on STEM challenges. In addition, we were privileged to watch Space X launch Falcon 9 and witnessed a 375 pound turtle named "Bubba" being released back into the ocean after three months of healing at the Brevard Animal Wellness Zoo. We all had a wonderful experience.

## Kids of the Week

Want your kid to be a Barker Kid of the Week? Mail (or drop off) your photo (with a SASE if you want it back) to Birch Barker, 63174 Birch Rd., Vandalia, MI 49095 ... you can always email me at [sailorphil@philvitale.com](mailto:sailorphil@philvitale.com) or [onlinebarker@gmail.com](mailto:onlinebarker@gmail.com).

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- Avoid Penalties! If over 65, ask employer for proof of insurance.
- Watch for your new Medicare card to arrive in the mail.

### Keep This List!

Let's Talk! Over-the-phone appointments welcome!  
No cost!  
No obligation!

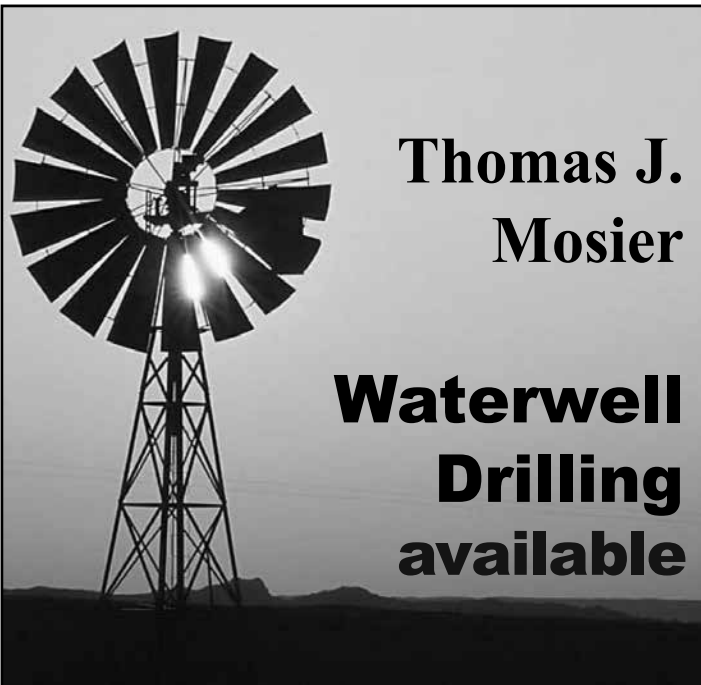


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# — Barker Kids of the Week —

Gianna Saladino (left), visiting her Aunt Donna and Uncle Chris Stevens (south side) from Sarasota Florida with her grandparents, Joe and Becky Saladino. It's her first time swimming in a lake (no sharks, no gators in Birch, lol). Also her first time tubing. Best of all, she met a new friend, Eleanor who is staying at the Hogoboom cottage. (Max the dog is also pictured with the girls.)



Bug of the week ... thanks to Mr. Bob (King, north side) for the pic of the dragonfly shedding it's skin ... kinda creepy but nice photo

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# Birch Lake Diversions



*Provided Exclusively to the Birch Barker from Mrs. Ima Foodnudge*

## Perfect summer fruit salad

This fruit salad is perfect for a backyard bbq or any occasion. There are never leftovers! This is one of my favorite fruit salad recipes, as I think the citrusy sauce really makes it. This salad is tastier the longer you can let it soak in its juices. I prefer 3 to 4 hours in the refrigerator before I serve it.



Prep Time: 25 mins  
Cook Time: 5 mins  
Additional Time: 3 hrs  
Total Time: 3 hrs 30 mins  
Servings: 10

### Ingredients

These are the ingredients you'll need for this top-rated fruit salad recipe:

- For the sauce: fresh orange and lemon juices, brown sugar, grated orange and lemon zests, and vanilla extract
- The fruit you'll need: pineapple, strawberries, kiwis, bananas, oranges, grapes, and blueberries

### Directions:

1. Make the sauce on the stove and let it cool.
2. Arrange the fruits in a container, then pour the sauce over them.
3. Cover and refrigerate to allow the flavors to meld.

## Card Games



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**Paul@TheLakeLife.com**

# — Camp Tannadoonah —

## Camp accreditation visit

Last week I had the opportunity to spend a day visiting another camp in Michigan for their American Camp Association (ACA) accreditation. The ACA organization accredits camps across the country – including Camp Tannadoonah – to ensure that everyone is following standards and meeting expectations for quality programming, training, staffing, and policies at their camps. Each accredited camp completes an annual document review to ensure compliance, and every 5 years we have an in-person visit from a team of accreditation visitors.

All of the accreditation visits for camps are done by a team of volunteers who have been trained in the standards and have experience with accreditation at their own camps. Each year, I visit two to three other camps for their accreditation process. It's always interesting to visit other camps and learn how they do things and see their programs in action!

There is a long list of standards that everyone must meet in order to maintain their ACA Accredited Status, and they fall into 7 categories: Core/Foundational Standards, Administration, Facilities, Health and Wellness, Staff Qualifications Training and Supervision, Program Design and Activities, and Aquatics. We

have a collection of binders full of written explanations, documents, certificates, checklists, and other information to share with our ACA visitors.

Each time I visit another camp, I come back with so many ideas and things I want to try at Camp T. The camp I visited last week was Sherman Lake YMCA Outdoor Center in Augusta, Michigan, about an hour away from us near Gull Lake. Their current Executive Director was the Executive Director for Camp Eberhart a few years back, so it was fun to reconnect with him, too.

They have a beautiful property that is really unique. Unlike most Y camps, they're not affiliated with any local YMCA. They're an independent Y camp that was built on the site of a former boy scout camp. They told us they're the only one like this in the country. They serve approximately the same number of overnight campers as we do, with a capacity of 160 per week (ours is 152). But their day camp program is FAR larger than ours. In a typical week at Camp T, we have 25-40 day campers; they serve 200 day campers every week! As a result, their staff is much larger than ours with over 100 summer camp staff compared to our 35 or so.

I came back to camp with ideas for



next summer's staff training, some new program ideas, a new system for organizing our accreditation and licensing documents, and pictures of some activity areas and storage solutions they use at their programs that I want to try. One of the great things about the ACA accreditation process is the opportunity to learn from other camps, and every camp I've ever visited has been willing to share their documents, program information, and let us take pictures of things we thought would be useful to take back to our own camp.

~Mrs. Amber

## Considering selling your lake home or property?

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Michelle

Katrina

Dennis

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

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**White composite closet doors.** (Left) 48" w X 79" h. \$50 for the pair. Call Deb at 219-765-8691.



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**FOUND, Flotsam:** did you lose a **2' bright pink hibiscus** over the weekend? The plant was rescued and put in a bucket until the plastic pot floated by (BTW, it's pot bound). Bob and Leslie King



Lost in a recent big storm, **large blue and yellow O'Brien tubing tube.** If found, please contact Sue Davis at 574-993-6031.

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## Lost & FOUND

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# HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

## Dig in and make us proud!

Anyone can help out with projects at Birch Lake ... or even without a project! Just go on out and dig in ... clean something up, fix something that needs fixing, make the community one we can all be proud to live in!

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



## 2024 BLYC OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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**Blair Garceau (E)** ..... Chairman, Homeowners  
476-9862 ..... blairgarceau@gmail.com



# BIRCH LAKE YACHT CLUB PAY YOUR DUES NOW!



Support the BLYC, support our lake, support our Community!

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- \$ \_\_\_ - BLYC Associate Member\* Dues (\$10 / year)  
\*Associate membership is available to current associate members  
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- \$ \_\_\_ - **WATER QUALITY/INVASIVE SPECIES\*\***
- \$ \_\_\_ - **FIREWORKS FUND\*\***
- \$ \_\_\_ - Homeowners' Assoc. (\$10 / year)
- \$ \_\_\_ - Sailing Fees (\$15 / year)
- \$ \_\_\_ - Building Improvement Fund
- \$ \_\_\_ - Safety Committee
- \$ \_\_\_ - Other non-party related expenses
- \$ \_\_\_ - BLYC Roof Fund
- \$ \_\_\_ - BLYC AED Fund
- \$ \_\_\_ - Misc.

\*\*See page 2 for status of these important contributions

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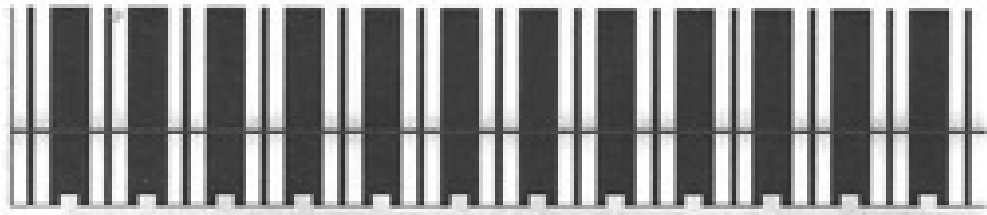
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